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It was published in Telugu and has been translated by now into several languages.
This edition contains a foreword by Dr. Sri K. Parvathi Kumar and is supplemented with numerous footnote explanations, images and a commented register of persons.

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Shankar Bhatt Sripada Srivallabha Charitamrutam

Shankar Bhatt

Sripada Srivallabha Charitamrutam

Biography of a Dattatreya-Avatar

Dhanishta

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Sripada Srivallabha Charitamrutam

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Sripada Srivallabha Charitamrutam

Biography of a Dattatreya Avatar

Original Manuscript by Shankar Bhatt
(Contemporary of Sri Sripada)

Dhanishta

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Foreword

This publication of the World Teacher Trust is intended to inform about the incarnation of the Cosmic Teaching Principle as it exists in Sirius and its incarnation upon Earth from time to time, to give impulse to wisdom teachings upon Earth.

The Earth has a Hierarchy of Teachers, popularly known as the White Brotherhood, whose abodes are in all important mountain ranges on Earth, with their main centers in the Himalayas. This Hierarchy is guided by Sirius, where the Great Grand White Brotherhood exists headed by the Cosmic Teaching Principle. This Cosmic Teaching Principle is known as Lord Dattatreya in the ancient Indian scriptures. He is always surrounded by dogs representing the Dog Star, also known as Cerberus and Sarama. The dogs are representatives of their watchfulness. The evolution of beings on this planet is however overviewed by the Cosmic Teaching Principle residing in Sirius. Sirius, being south to our system, has the teaching principle essentially of Love-Wisdom. Love is the fundamental principle upon which Wisdom is taught by every true teacher.

The head of the Hierarchy of Teachers upon Earth is called the World Teacher and the teacher who presides over the World Teacher, stationed in Sirius, is called the Teacher to the World Teacher or the Cosmic Teacher. The World Teacher is known as Lord Maitreya while the Cosmic Teacher is known as Lord Dattatreya.

Lord Dattatreya happened to manifest in the 14th century as Srīpāda Srīvallabha in Pīthikapuram, East Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh, South India. He lived for 30 years in the body, conducted extraordinary acts, and taught in the simplest way the Synthesis of Wisdom. He proclaimed himself that He would be reborn two more times, one time as Narasimha Saraswati and another time as Swami Samarth. Through these three incarnations, He fairly established a way of life where Synthesis of Wisdom is followed in daily life. He simplified many an orthodox practice. He laid a simple path to the truth, devoid of technicalities and specialties, which enabled common men and women to follow the Path of Light.

His inspiration spreads itself far and wide in the South and North. There were many teachers and masters that received His touch and transmitted such touch to His followers. Consequently, many Indian devotees started believing that all those subsequent teachers are also incarnations of Dattatreya. This is but a hyperbole with little truth in it.

This book contains some illustrations of reincarnations of Dattatreya such as Shirdi Sai Baba, Manikya Prabhu, Jesus the Christ and so on, which may be gently judged as the flamboyance of the over-enthusiastic devotion. Similarly, there is also mention of the visit of Srīpāda Srīvallabha to Shambhala, to the Pole Star and similar excursions which are left to the discretion of the reader.

The book is brought out as a true translation by the World Teacher Trust, primarily to communicate the existence of the Grand Cosmic Teaching Principle and its advent on Earth in Kali Yuga. The readers may approach the whole subject and accept whatever is acceptable to their conscience.

May this attempt serve its own purpose. The effort is a humble submission to the seekers of Truth without any claims or assertions.

As the great initiate Helena P. Blavatsky said, let "Gently to read and kindly to judge" be the approach.

K. Parvathi Kumar
Global Chairman
The World Teacher Trust
Thursday, 4th August, 2016
Visakhapatnam

The Author and the Book

The biography of Srīpāda Srīvallabha (1320 – 1350) was written by a contemporary, Shankar Bhatt. While introducing the topic of the book — the events around the first incarnation of Lord Dattatreya in Kali Yuga, the present Dark Age — he presents himself as coming from Karnataka, a state in the south-western region of India. He calls himself an ignorant and illiterate person and humbly submits the entire work as an expression of Srīpāda's divine will and blessing. Nevertheless, he is the author of a stupendous multi-faceted work of profound spirituality, well designed and written. Throughout the book, he maintains the stance of a reporter who endeavours to objectively describe what he witnesses and hears. He tries not to judge but to record events and encounters. He notes down his own experiences as well as the descriptions and teachings he hears from others. He is not writing from the perspective of an uninvolved observer but rather allows us to participate in his inner processes — his questions and doubts, his crises and tribulations, his awe and astonishment.

He was already on a pilgrimage before he begins writing of the book. From his remarks, we can infer that he had already walked at least 1000 kilometres following a hint from Srī Krishna to see the deity of Srī Kanyaka Parameswari in a temple at the southernmost point of India. Shankar Bhatt receives the call from her to visit her brother Srīpāda Srīvallabha in Kuruvapuram. The place is located on an island in the Krishna River, at a distance of about 1200 kilometres. Shankar Bhatt has never heard of Srīpāda before, but without any doubt, he immediately starts his epic journey totalling several thousand kilometres. It is the year 1336 — Srīpāda has just disappeared from His birthplace in Pīthikapuram and is at that time on a tour to Kashi (Benares) and the Himalayas by "yogic travelling".

Shankar Bhatt is travelling by foot, sometimes by bullock carts or horse chariots — without luggage and money, not knowing how to reach the goal. He is living on alms and hospitality. He is sleeping at the places he comes along, experiencing hunger and life-threatening situations. He is walking alone or with co-travellers. He meets saints, frauds and robbers, farmers and merchants, kings, housewives and prostitutes. He en-

counters orthodox arrogance, sectarianism, lies, disputes and even complots against Srīpāda, which the latter dissolves in surprising ways.

Shankar Bhatt is a Brahmin, but his experiences teach him to overcome the barriers of caste and creed and feel the unity of all who are striving towards the divine. He undergoes deep transformations and is carried forward on his initiatory journey by a fiery aspiration which is strengthened by his encounters with sublime siddhas and yogis. He interrogates them about profound spiritual topics and above all about their experiences with the divine, with Srīpāda Srīvallabha. Often, they knew beforehand through messages of Srīpāda or clairvoyant perceptions that Shankar Bhatt would be coming, and they willingly share with him fantastic stories about Srīpāda's effulgent presence and his miraculous playful pastimes. He gets insights into previous incarnations of people reaching far back in time. And he learns about Srīpāda's announcements of His own future incarnations as Narasimha Saraswati (1378 - 1459) and Swamī Samartha (? - 1878). There are also many hints to future events some of which by now already belong to the past.

The book is full of unimaginable events, revelations and wonders, like cases of souls simultaneously incarnating in different bodies or numerous cases of bringing deceased persons back to life.

But the indisputable highlight is Shankar Bhatt's personal encounter with Srīpāda, the goal of his search. The story does not end there. Shankar Bhatt continues his journey to other places Srīpāda sends him. Shankar Bhatt meets His family and friends and collects more astounding stories.

He finally comes to live with Srīpāda at Kuruvapuram. There, he looks after the numerous devotees coming to His wisdom teachings; he takes care of cooking and cleaning. When the food is not enough for all the visitors, Srīpāda sprinkles some water on it and it becomes inexhaustible. He is a first-hand witness of how Srīpāda consults, consoles and heals full of love and affection. He works on the biography with a tremendous memory about names and details of events. He writes the Charitāmrutam[1] on Bhūrja Patra, bark leaves of the Indian birch tree. And he writes it in Sanskrit.

The book has a strange history: after the disappearance of Srīpāda, Shankar Bhatt continues to live in Kuruvapuram for three more years

1 Analogous meaning: Ecstatic elixir

completing the text — and Srīpāda appears to him every night at midnight. After finishing the Charitāmrutam, he reads it with five persons. He knows from Srīpāda that it won't be published immediately: after a Telugu version is created, his Sanskrit version will vanish and will be transported to a subterranean location under the birthplace of Srīpāda. The Telugu version will come to light in the 33rd generation of the family of Srīpāda's maternal grandfather after a certain sign for this is given. Then the book will be published and it will be translated into many languages, including German. Srīpāda's name will start spreading all over the world and millions of people will be attracted to His Samsthan, the temple at the birthplace of Srīpāda.

The sign for the reappearance of the book was given in 1999 to Malladi Govinda Deekshitulu, a member of the 33rd generation of the family of Srīpāda's maternal grandfather. He copied the Telugu text from the old manuscript. Then he immersed the old copy in the Krishna River at Vijayawada as prophesied and brought a copy to the Samsthan for the publication of the book. You find the details in Mr. Deekshitulu's description at the end of this book and also the words of Srī Sajjanagada Ramaswamy, the late spiritual leader of the Maha Samsthanam, giving more information.

The book is partly not easy to read. You will encounter numerous names of persons and deities, unfamiliar concepts and expressions. To help the reader, the present edition is enriched with many footnote explanations and a commented register of persons. The best, however, is to read the book with an open mind and heart, not trying to understand everything.

We would like to express our gratitude to the following persons and institutions: to the late Mr. Malladi Govinda Deekshitulu for bringing the Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam to light; to Mrs. Lakshmi Nagasethu, who brought the book to our attention and established the contact with the Samsthan; to Srī Sajjanagada Ramaswamy and the President of the Maha Samsthanam, Pithapuram, for giving the translation and publishing rights; the translator of their English first publication, Mr. Perepa Sreeramamurthy, who also gave some help; to the President of the Srī Datta Vishwarupa Samhiti, Tadepalligudem, and Mr. Valavala Suryanarayana for giving the translation and publishing rights regarding their English publication done by Dr. J. Satyaprasad, who gave us his corrected version; to Mr. Keerthi Vallabha for sharing with us his ongoing English translation and Mr.

Srinivas Oruganti for helping in this. The present edition was developed during the German translation; the revised text is mainly based on the first English publication of the Maha Samsthanam complemented by the other two translations. We received great help from Mr. Raveendra Nath Yasarapu by giving explanations of unknown terms and concepts; in this, Wikipedia and the German YogaWiki were also very useful. Dr. K. Parvathi Kumar, the Global Chairman of the World Teacher Trust, wholeheartedly supported the publication.

The presence and guidance of Srīpāda Srīvallabha was clearly felt by all who worked on this translation; it is His work finding expression in this way. To Him belongs our deepest gratitude. May He continue to direct the book to the hearts of the readers.

The Publishers

Srīrasthu[1] *Subhamasthu*[2] *Avignamasthu*[3]

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye[4]

1 May the Goddess Lakshmi protect us.
2 May auspicious things happen.
3 May there be no obstacles.
4 May Lord Srīpāda protect us.

Chapter 1

The Encounter between Shankar Bhatt and Vyāghreswara Sarma

My salutations to Srī Maha Ganadhipati, Srī Maha Saraswati, lineage of my preceptors, Srī Krishna Bhagavan and all gods and goddesses. I propose to describe the glory of Srīpāda Srīvallabha — the latest manifestation of Lord Datta; He is the Lord of innumerable universes.

Srī Dattatreya is the oldest and the eternal one. Srī Dattatreya has incarnated in this Kali Yuga[1] as Srīpāda Srīvallabha in the city of Pithapuram, which is situated in the Godavari[2] region of Andhra Pradesh. It is impossible even for the great scholars to describe the grandeur of His divine play. I am completely ignorant and illiterate. Therefore, I submit in all humility that my attempt to portray His life history is only on account of His will, divine order and His divine blessings.

My name is Shankar Bhatt. I belong to Karnataka Desa[3]. I am from the Smartha[4] sect and hail from Bharadwaja gotra[5]. I went to the holy town of Udipi[6] on pilgrimage to visit Bhagavan Srī Krishna in His temple. There the infant Krishna, with a beautifully coloured peacock feather adorning His head, gave me His dārshan[7]. He ordered me to visit Goddess Srī Kanyaka Parameswari in Kanya Kumari[8]. I took holy bath in the confluence of the three oceans there. One Tuesday, I entered the temple to see the goddess. The priest was performing the worship of the deity very sincerely. He took the red coloured flowers from my hand and began to worship Her. At that time, the Mother saw me with Her benevolent looks and said, "Shankarā, I

1 Dark Age
2 Second longest river in India
3 Karnataka: Indian state; Desa: ancient name for province; all location information refers to India, unless not explicitly mentioned otherwise
4 Follower of the Advaita philosophy given out by Adi Shankaracharya
5 Lineage; origin from Rishi Bharadwaja
6 A pilgrimage town in Karnataka
7 Vision, auspicious sight
8 Southernmost point of India

am pleased with the sacred devotion in your heart. Go to Kuruvapuram[1] and take the dārshan of Srīpāda Srīvallabha and obtain fulfilment of your birth. By the mere dārshan of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, an undefinable experience will accrue to your mind, ātma[2] and all your organs."

Thus, I received the grace of Mother Goddess and started from that holy place. On my way, I reached a village called Marutva Malai, which was at a short distance from Kanya Kumari. I learnt that while Hanuman was carrying the Sanjīvini Mountain from the Himalayas, a small piece of it had fallen down here and therefore this village is called Marutva Malai[3].

The hill in the village of Marutva Malai is beautiful to behold. There are some caves in it. I learnt that the area is a hilly tract inhabited by siddha purushās[4] undertaking penance in an invisible form.

I was looking into those caves with the hope of seeing any great person. I was hoping to get lucky by seeing one of them. However, a tiger was standing at the entrance of one cave. At the sight of the tiger, trembling and tremor started in all my limbs. Agitated with great fear, I cried aloud at once, "Srīpāda! Srīvallabhā! Datta Prabhū!" in despair. The tiger stood still like a domestic animal. An aged sage emerged from the cave. The entire area of Marutva Malai reverberated with the name of Srīpāda Srīvallabha all at once.

Then the old sage said, "My son, you are a fulfilled one. Only great siddhas, great yogis, wise men, and paramahamsas who dwell in nirvikalpa samādhi[5] realize that Lord Datta has incarnated as Srīpāda Srīvallabha in this Kali Yuga. You could come here only because you are lucky. This is a land of spiritual pursuit. It is siddha bhūmi[6]. Your desire will get satisfied. You will certainly be rewarded with the meeting of Srīpāda. The tiger at the entrance of the cave is a jnāni[7]. I advise you to salute him."

Then I saluted that wise person who was in the form of a tiger. Immediately, the tiger roared the sound Oum. The whole of Marutva Malai re-

1 Also called Kurungadda; an island in the Krishna River at the village of Atkur near Raichur, Karnataka
2 The self, the soul
3 Sanskrit: Maruti = Hanuman, Malai = mountain/hill; the mountain carried by Hanuman
4 Beings who have reached perfection and have super-human powers
5 Highest absorption in the Self
6 Land of siddhas and land of fulfillment
7 Wise person

sounded with that roaring sound. It had also melodiously sung the prayer Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye![1] I was watching this wonderful scene. All the atoms in the form of the tiger disintegrated and a man with a lustrous celestial body manifested there. That celestial person paid obeisance to the old sage and flew into the sky with his luminous body. The old sage who was before me smiled. He invited me into the cave. I entered the cave silently. A stream of compassion was flowing from the eyes of the aged sage. He created fire[2] by the power of his will. He created sacred materials, some sweets and fruits for offering them as an oblation to the sacred fire. He offered those things into the sacred fire while chanting Vedic hymns.

That aged sage observed, "All righteous rituals like yagna and yāga[3] are getting extinct in the world. Man, who is benefitted from the five elements, is forgetting the deity who is the embodiment of the five elements. Yagnas are to be performed for the gratification of the deities. Deities get gratified from the sacrifices. Nature becomes favourable because of their grace. Man cannot survive when any force in nature turns virulent. Calamities occur if the forces of nature are not appeased. If man departs from the righteous path, dangerous developments are caused by the forces of nature.

I performed this sacrifice for the welfare of the world. Yagna or yajana means fusion. Fortunately, you have witnessed this sacrifice. As a result of witnessing this sacrifice you will get the dārshan of Srīpāda Srīvallabha who is an incarnation of Srī Datta. This is a very rare fortune. The merit earned in many births will suddenly fructify and give such unattainable fortune."

I saluted that great personage and said, "Great one among siddhas! I am not a scholar or a yogi. I am not a devotee. I am an ignoramus[4]. Kindly take complete mercy on me and clear some of my doubts." The old hermit agreed to it.

Then I prayed, "Oh, great siddha, when I visited Goddess Mother Srī Kanyaka Parameswari, She directed me to go to Kuruvapuram for the dārshan of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. Here I saw you and the great one in the form of a tiger. Who is that great person in the guise of a tiger? Who really is Srīpāda Srīvallabha? Kindly clarify my doubts and favour me."

---

1 May Lord Srīpāda protect us!
2 Yagna Homam, sacrificial fire
3 Holy sacrifices
4 Ignorant person

That aged sage began his narration, "My son, in the Godavari region of Andhra Pradesh there is an ancient village called Atreyapuram, which was famous as a land where sage Atri conducted austerities[1]. In that village, a Brahmin was born in the gotra[2] of Kāsyapa in an orthodox family. His parents named him Vyāghreswara Sarma. Even though his father was a great scholar, the son became an incorrigible idiot. In spite of educational training for a long time, he could not even perform the Gayatri mantra prayer at the prescribed times of the day. He could only utter the Sanskrit words to the effect that it was Vyāghreswara Sarma who was saluting. He became disturbed by the taunting words of others. The ill-treatment by his parents had also increased. As a Brahmin priest, he was not called to attend any auspicious functions. He was only asked to accept gift of gingelli[3] seeds or attend death anniversary ceremonies in case of extreme emergencies when no one else was available. These acts are considered very mean and are performed only by the lowest among the Brahmins, who have not mastered any education. So, a feeling of inferiority complex developed in him. He heard that great ascetics live in the Himalayas and by their grace one can realize the knowledge of self.

"Once during dawn, he had a dream. In that dream he saw a celestial body radiating with divine effulgence. That body was descending to the earth from the firmament. As soon as His divine feet touched, the earth was filled with heavenly illumination. That divine child approached Vyāghreswara Sarma with slow steps and asserted, 'Why fear when I am here? There is bondage of debt between Me and this village. Without the bondage of indebtedness even a dog cannot come to us. Go to the Badarikāranya[4] in the Himalayan region and you will be blessed with auspiciousness.' Saying so, the celestial disappeared.

"Vyāghreswara Sarma reached Badarikāranya. He was getting food on the way without much effort. However, a dog was following him from the beginning of the journey. He was wandering, along with the dog, in the Badarikāranya. In his wanderings he took a holy bath in the Urvasi Kunda[5].

1 Living in a penance
2 Lineage
3 Sesame
4 Badrinath; a holy place in the state Uttarakhand in India and an important pilgrimage centre
5 Island in the Brahmaputra River; place where the celestial nymph Urvasi was created by Vishnu

The dog also took a holy bath along with him. At that time, a great sage accompanied by his disciples came to Urvasi Kunda for religious ablutions. Vyāghreswara prostrated at the feet of the great personage and prayed to accept him as a disciple. The great person kindly consented. The dog disappeared immediately when the great one accepted Vyāghreswara as his disciple. That great person averred, 'Vyāghreswara, that dog which followed you is the personification of the merit earned by you in previous births. Goaded by time, you could come here and you could take bath in Urvasi Kunda. You are attracted towards the land of penance by Nava Narayanas[1]. All this is the grace of Srīpāda Srīvallabha.'

"Vyāghreswara Sarma bowed down and asked, 'Master, who is Srīpāda Srīvallabha? How did His grace shower on me?' The siddha replied at length to the questions posed to him. 'My son, Srīpāda Srīvallabha is Lord Datta Himself. In Tretā Yuga[2], Bharadwaja Maharshi conducted a huge sacrifice known as Sāvitrakāthaka Chayanamu[3] in Pithapuram. He invited Shiva and Parvati[4] to that function. In Pyamgya Brāhmana[5] text, it was mentioned that many great persons, siddhas and yogis are born in the lineage of Bharadwaja in accordance with the boon granted by Shiva and Parvati to him. Even though they were lost in other parts of the country, Pyamgya Brahmanam[6] and Sāndra Sindhu Veda[7] were carefully preserved in Shamballa village, the land of incarnation of Kalki[8]. At the end of Kali Yuga and the beginning of Satya Yuga[9], Srīpāda Srīvallabha – an incarnation of Srī Datta –will arrive in Pithapuram in physical form. Only when the sins committed in many births get diminished and when good deeds start giving results, devotion to Datta will develop. When devotion to Datta becomes perfect, Srīpāda Srīvallabha will grant the wealth of sight, touch and speech in any age and at any time. As the meritorious deeds of

1 Nine Narayanas; Narayana: the highest being
2 Silver Age
3 A ritual to the Sun
4 The primordial, universal father and mother forces
5 An ancient text that foretold the future
6 Brahmanas: old Indian texts with comments on the Vedas
7 A mystical Sanskrit work written on palm leaves dealing with time and the incidents of the future
8 The 10th Avatar of Lord Vishnu
9 The Golden Age, also called Krita Yuga

your past lives are strong, the mercy of Srīpāda Srīvallabha showers on you. I am now leaving for meeting my preceptor Mahāvatār Babaji. I will return after one year. Practice kriya yoga[1] in the caves reserved for you and attempt for the realization of self-knowledge.' Thus instructing, the sage left for Dronagiri in the region of Sanjīvini Mountain.

"Vyāghreswara Sarma sat in the cave assigned to him. He could not understand the methods of kriya yoga or the preaching on self-knowledge. He was thinking like this: 'Gurujī used to call me lovingly as vyāghra (tiger). All my co-disciples are sitting on the skin of a tiger and are meditating. When the skin of a tiger is so sacred and benefits the yogi so much, how much greater the tiger should be? Moreover, Gurujī asked me to strive for knowledge of self. Self means myself only. What have I got to do with others? My name is Vyāghreswarudu. Therefore, I should be a tiger only. So, I have to meditate upon the tiger only. That is my ātma[2]. If I could get the form of a tiger, it amounts to my attaining self-knowledge.'

"One year passed easily. The guru visited the place. He went to each cave and observed the progress made by his disciples in their spiritual quest. He could not find Vyāghreswara in his cave; instead, a tiger was resting in the cave. Srī Gurujī analyzed the matter through his yogic insight. He realized that as Vyāghreswarudu meditated intensely upon the form of a vyāghra (tiger), he got transformed into a tiger. Gurujī felt happy at the pure heart and cleanliness of the self of his disciple. He blessed him and taught him to utter Oum. He asked him to constantly repeat the words Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye[3] as a mantra[4].

"Vyāghreswara reached near Kuruvapuram in the form of a tiger. To reach Kuruvapuram, one has to cross a river[5]. At that time, Srīpāda Srīvallabha was with the congregation of His devotees. He suddenly announced, 'A great devotee of Mine is calling Me. I will go and immediately return.' Saying so, He began walking on the water in His lustrous body. When Srīpāda Srīvallabha was walking on the water in this manner, a lotus flower was emerging from the water at every spot where He was plac-

1 An ancient yoga technique
2 The self, the soul
3 May Lord Srīpāda protect us!
4 Invocation
5 The river Krishna

ing His sacred foot. He arrived at the river bank on the other side and saw Vyāghreswara who was incessantly chanting the mantra Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye! Vyāghreswara paid obeisance to the auspicious divine feet of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. Srīvallabha mounted on the tiger and crossed the river floating on the water on the back of the tiger and reached Kuruvapuram. All the people were witnessing this spectacle in utter astonishment.

"According to Datta Purāna, Srī Dattatreya incarnated as Dharma Sāsta[1]. When that Lord took birth as the son of Hari-Hara, He arrived at the capital of the kingdom riding on a tiger. Devendra took the form of that tiger and served as a vehicle for Ayyappa Swamī or Dharma Sāsta[2]. Some people were of the opinion that Srīvallabha was verily Dharma Sāsta Himself. Goddess Amba rides both on a lion and a tiger also. So, some people were of the opinion that Srīvallabha was an inseparable form of the Universal Mother Goddess.

"The moment Srīvallabha dismounted from the tiger after reaching Kuruvapuram, the tiger fell dead. A great person with divine brilliance came out of the body of the tiger. He prayed to Srīvallabha to use the skin of the tiger form of his previous birth as His seat. Srī Charana consented for that. With overflowing love, Srīvallabha said, 'My son Vyāghreswara, in one of your births, you were a very strong wrestler. During that life you were indulging in all sorts of cruel acts. Those activities include fighting with tigers, injuring them, capturing them, famishing them, and arranging their exhibitions for the recreation of people.[3] On account of the past sinful acts, you are to take animal births in many lives, but with My grace all that accumulated sin is cancelled in this life of a tiger. As you remained in the form of a tiger for a long time, you can assume that form at will at any time. I am granting you this boon. You will meet and obtain the blessings of many siddhas who are carrying out penance in the Himalayas from hundreds of years. May you rise to great heights in the path of yoga.' Srīpāda blessed Vyāghreswara in the above manner."

1 A divinity much worshipped in India; a son of Lord Shiva and Mohini

2 Ayyappa is Dharma Sāsta, born out of the union of Shiva and the female Mohini form of Vishnu

3 A similar account is given in the "Autobiography of a Yogi, chapter 'The Tiger Swami'

What Shankar Bhatt saw previously was actually the same Vyāghreswara Sarma as a tiger. He lives in the Himalayas. Great sages are averse to public contact. This man stands as a sentinel for such yogis and guards against disturbances from common folk. Great hermits have a system of transmitting ideas and news amongst themselves. They need not come out of their places or employ messengers for that purpose. However, for the sake of sport[1], they employ Vyāghreswara to exchange news. This is all the divine play of Lord Srī Datta.

"My dear Shankar Bhatt, before the Creation, there was the first couple[2]. When a wife becomes pregnant, she will have some desires. It is the duty of the husband to fulfill her desires. When Sharvani[3] became pregnant, Parameswara[4] asked Her if She had any desire. Then Sharvani said, 'Lord, I experienced all pleasures having the body of a female; I do not know how the experience would be when having a male body. Hence, please oblige me'. Parameswara said, 'Let it be so'. Immediately Sharvani took the form of a male. That was the form of Maha Vishnu[5]. There was no way for the baby inside Her to come out. Then, a lotus sprouted from the umbilicus of Maha Vishnu. From that lotus, Brahma[6] was born and started Creation. Srī Maha Vishnu created the form of Sharvani again from His body. The secrets of gods and their plays are unthinkable. In this way, Srī Maha Vishnu and Parvati became brother and sister.

"On the full moon day in the month of Sravana[7], Parvati Devi tied rakhī[8] to Srī Maha Vishnu and said 'Brother, Srī Bhola Shankar[9] grants boons to everyone without thinking about propriety and feasibility. Every such

1 Sanskrit: Līla
2 First wife and husband; Shiva and Parvati
3 The goddess Durga or Parvati
4 The highest God
5 The preserver, among the Trinity
6 The creator, among the Trinity
7 The 5th month of the Indian year beginning around the end of July and ending in the 3rd week of August
8 A friendship thread tied at Raksha Bandhan around the wrist of a brother or a sister; Raksha Bandhan is an Indian festival where the love and duties between brothers and sisters are celebrated, also between similar, biologically unrelated relationships.
9 A name given to Shiva for his propensity to grant boons to whomsoever is in distress

time, you are manifesting in avatars with your Vishnu māya to kill demons thus saving my mangalyam[1]. Brother, let this practice of tying rakhī remain forever as a symbol of love between brother and sister. Srī Maha Vishnu said 'thathasthu'[2]. In accordance with this pledge only, when there was trouble from Bhasmasura, Srī Vishnu took the form of Mohini[3] and annihilated him. Vishnu māya is unthinkable. It is difficult to guess that it would be like this or that. Dharma Sāsta was born to Mohini and Shankara. After Dharma Sāsta was born, Mohini disappeared. Dharma Sāsta later took the avatar of Ayyappa Swamī in Kali Yuga. There is a divine secret in this. Dharma Sāsta is none other than Srī Maha Vishnu. In that form, Brahma and Rudra also merged with Srī Maha Vishnu, so we can say that it is the Lord Dattatreya with those three forms merging. When Parameswari manifested as the daughter of Pandya Bhūpala[4] with the name of Mīnakshi[5], Parameswar manifested Himself as Sundareswar[6]. Srī Maha Vishnu performed the marriage of Mīnakshi and Sundareswar. But when Parameswari manifested Herself as Srī Kanyaka Parameswari, the marriage did not take place. But the Srīpāda Srīvallabha manifestation is beyond place and time. Srīvallabha manifested Himself in Pithapuram in Kali Yuga. But that same form of Srīvallabha was there from the very beginning of Creation in divine luminous worlds. The divine plays[7] of Srīpāda for thirty years, from 1320 AD when He was born in Pīthikapuram till 1350 AD when He disappeared in Kuruvapuram, cannot be comprehended even by the Seven Rishis. How can we understand?"

I questioned, "Swamī, we are now in 1336 AD. Will that mean that Srīvallabha will remain on earth for the next fourteen years only? Will He end His avatar so early?"

Sadguru Dev said, "My dear, if Srīvallabha is born, then there will be retreat. However, His play has no birth or death. He is not affected by time and place."

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1 In the Indian marriage ceremonie a thread or necklace that the groom puts around the bride's neck. After tying three knots, they are officially married.
2 Let it be so
3 The only female avatar of Vishnu
4 A ruler of a kingdom in the south of India
5 The Fish-Eyed One
6 The Handsome One
7 Here: Līlas

Srī Kanyaka Purāna

"King Agrasena, who was a contemporary of Srī Krishna, was ruling a kingdom in the Āryavartam[1]. He was a Vaishya. Some of the descendents of that king used to do business in the south. Some were staying with the families of king's relatives in Brihat Sila Nagaram[2] in the Andhra region. One relative of king Agrasena by name Kusuma Shreshti was ruling that region in accordance with dharma with Brihat Sila Nagaram as his capital. The Kusuma Shreshti couple were righteous people with good conduct. They were doing many good deeds like yajnas and yagas[3]. Bhaskarācharya[4] was the guru of the king and very close to Kusuma Shreshti.

"Jaganmatha[5] took birth in their house as Srī Kanyaka Parameswari. Srīpāda Srīvallabha made a part of Him be born in their house. He was named Virupāksha. In the past, Ravana[6] pleased Kailasavasa[7] to obtain the Atma lingam[8]. Ravana then asked for a mean boon. Per the boon, Jaganmatha accompanied him in Bhadrakāli form. The Atma lingam fell on the ground at Gokarna kshetram[9] and got established there. My dear, the glory of Gokarna kshetram is great. There is a divine secret relationship among Vaishya caste, Gokarnas[10] and Gokarna kshetram. Even though Ravana was killed, one part of him took birth in Kali Yuga as a king who was blinded by lust.

Amba[11] expressed Her Bhadrakāli form in another way in Kali Yuga. Along with Her, some relatives of the king's family offered themselves to the agni[12] and expressed their self-respect according to the tradition of

1 Region in North India
2 Name of an ancient kingdom where Vasavī was born to King Kusuma Shreshti and later she immolated herself. Currently the town of Penugonda, with a Vasavī Kanyaka Parameswari temple, is all that remains of the kingdom.
3 Holy sacrifices
4 The spiritual guru of the Ārya Vaishya community in the Brihat Sila Kingdom
5 The Mother of the World
6 The demon king of Lanka, from the Ramayana
7 Srī Shankara, Shiva
8 The eternal form of the higher self
9 A temple town on the western coast of India in the state of Karnataka
10 The ears of cows
11 The Divine Mother
12 Fire; here: self-immolation

the kingdom of Āryavarta. Thus, Srī Kanyaka Parameswari reached her lord, Lord Nagareswar[1].

"Before Amba was born, Kusuma Shreshti couple did many sacrifices[2]. Kusuma Shreshti used to take milk and gold from only one family of their relatives. They had the house name Pynda. When you go to Pīthikapuram, you will meet a mahatma, a descendent from that family. Now you go to Kuruvapuram and have dārshan of Srīvallabha." Thus saying, the great siddha gave his blessings to Shankar Bhatt and then disappeared with a luminous body.

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

1 Name of Shiva
2 Here: Yajnas

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 2

Srī Siddhendra Yogi and the Story of Vichitrapuram

I (Shankar Bhatt) was recollecting the strange experiences in Marutva Malai and continued my journey while mentally chanting the glorious name of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. I visited many holy places on the way. I was getting food without soliciting anyone for it. This was a rare experience. I felt that the weight of my body was gradually coming down after I reached the Kadamba forest in the Pāndya kingdom[1]. There was a Shiva linga of great power in that forest. After visiting that Ishvara[2] temple, my legs became very heavy. I rested for some time in that Shiva temple and resumed the journey. I found a hermitage nearby. A great person called Srī Siddhendra Yogi was living there. When I prostrated at his lotus feet, my body became lighter than a cotton ball. I was conscious of my body feeling, but the weight of my body had almost become nil. That great preceptor with a merciful heart stroked my head and blessed me saying, "May you have the dārshan of Srīpāda Srīvallabha."

The great yogi explained, "My son Shankar Bhatt, the Shiva linga which you have seen is very powerful. In ancient times, Devendra[3] conquered many demons, but one of them escaped. Indra ruthlessly killed that rākshasa[4] while he was in tapas[5]. Indra lost his lustre because of his sin in killing someone doing tapas. Indra visited many holy places for absolution from the sin. As the Shiva linga in the Kadamba forest of the Pāndya kingdom was very powerful, all the sins of Indra were suddenly removed when Indra reached the Kadamba forest. He wondered at it. With the idea that there was something special and great, he searched the place in all directions. He found a Shiva linga. Indra worshipped that Shiva linga with devotion and constructed a temple for that self-manifested Shiva linga. So,

1 A kingdom of South India
2 The highest Lord
3 King of the devas; Indra
4 Demon
5 Penance, fiery aspiration

what you saw was that Shiva linga consecrated by Indra. That Shiva linga removes all sins and confers all auspiciousness. Only people with great merit can see that Shiva linga. *However, for the devotees of Lord Datta, meeting pious people and visiting holy places will take place unasked-for and without any effort."*

I bowed again to the lotus feet of Srī Siddhendra Yogi. He asked me to go to the Shiva linga again. When I went there for the second time, I found a beautiful temple of Shiva. That was not the same temple that I visited previously. When I inquired, I learnt that it was the temple of Srī Mīnakshi and Sundareswara and that I was in the town of Madhura[1].

I visited the deities and went to the hermitage of Srī Siddhendra Yogi afterwards. The whole area now appeared as a thickly populated township. However, I searched much but I could not find the hermitage of the Srī Siddha Yogindra. Recollecting the holy name of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, I was going at random in some direction. The sunset started. It was getting dark. I saw a focus of light coming from the rear side. When I turned back, I saw a big serpent with three hoods following me. There were three diamonds on those three hoods. A brilliant light emitted from those diamonds. I was struck with fear. Whenever I stopped the serpent was also stopping.

The divine name of Srīpāda was swelling-up from the depth of my bosom involuntarily. Similarly, the holy name of Srīpāda was being uttered from my mouth involuntarily. At last I reached the ashram of Srī Siddha Yogindra. Immediately, the divine serpent and the light disappeared.

Srī Siddha Yogindra received me with utmost compassion. He gave me fried chickpeas in a plantain leaf as prasād[2]. I ate bellyful. The palpitation of my heart did not decrease even though I was taking food. Srī Siddha Yogindra massaged my right breast lightly with love. Afterwards, he touched my head with his holy hand. I noticed my heart's palpitation slowing down. I also felt as if some foul gases were being purged out of my lungs. I also experienced that all bad thoughts and cruel desires were pushed out of my mind. My body temperature increased and I was in a state of stupor.

1 The South Indian city of Madurai
2 Food given as an offering

The greatness of Datta and the qualifications required for obtaining the grace of Sripada

Then Srī Siddha Yogindra stated as following: "Shankar Bhatt, the Shiva linga which you saw at first and Srī Sundareswara whom you visited later are not different. Srī Dattatreya ordered that you should be provided with this kind of experience. So, it was granted to you accordingly. It means that time was rolled back and the Shiva linga established by Indra and the actual surroundings existing at that time were shown to you. To regard the creation that you witness as real creation is Māya[1]. Everything is an embodiment of the consciousness. *By the will of Lord Datta, the future may become present. The consciousness of Lord Datta is eternally present. Whatever happened in the past, and whatever is happening at present and whatever is to happen in the future will occur according to the will of Lord Datta. The resolve of Lord Datta is essential for an event to happen, not to happen or to happen in a different novel way. Srī Dattatreya is the personification of that magnificent determination responsible for the creation, sustenance, and liquidation. Now He has taken birth on this earth as Srīpāda Srīvallabha.* The residents of Pithapuram did not recognize Him properly. They failed to understand the philosophy of a guru. In Kuruvapuram, even ignorant persons like fishermen obtained knowledge of the Brahman[2]. *To get the grace of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, the ahamkāra*[3] *within us has to be destroyed. All types of pride have to become extinct. Then only we can understand His power, His mercy and His real nature.*

"A merchant named Dhananjaya found the Shiva linga consecrated by Indra and informed the matter to the ruler of that region called Kula Sekhara Pāndya. Following the command of Shiva, Kula Sekhara Pāndya developed it and built a town there. He named the town as Madhura. The Vegavati River, which is born out of the matted hair of Shiva, is sanctifying Madhura town. His son Malaya Dhwaja Pāndya conducted a sacrifice called putrakamesti[4] for obtaining progeny. From the altar of that sacri-

1 Illusion
2 The highest reality
3 The identification or the attachment to one's own ego; arrogance
4 A sacrifice upon the advice of a sage to obtain a male progenitor

fice, a three-year-old baby girl emerged as one not born out of womb. She is Mīnakshi Devi. She married Sundareswara. Maha Vishnu Himself participated in the ritual of offering the bride to the bridegroom and organised the divine marriage of Mīnakshi and Sundareswara on a very grand scale."

Srī Siddha Yogindra had added, "My son Shankar Bhatt, v*ibrations emanate from every article in the Creation. On account of these variegated vibrations, attraction and repulsion take place with other things. In the gross, subtle and mortal (fleshy) bodies, good vibrations due to good deeds and bad vibrations due to sinful acts arise. On account of a meritorious virtue, the desire for meeting pious persons, visiting holy places and an interest in righteous deeds will increase. Thereby, the virtuous merit gets enhanced. Unless that virtue increases and sin diminishes, we cannot have a steady devotion towards Lord Datta.* A variety of incidents happen owing to time, accumulated merit or demerit or other causes. You could come here only on account of Srīvallabha's boundless compassion on you.

"Dhananjaya, the merchant who gave information to Kula Sekhara Pāndya about the Shiva lingam installed by Indra, acquired great merit. As a consequence of that merit, he was born as Kusuma Sresthi, the king of Brihat Sila Nagaram[1], and got Jaganmatha[2] as his daughter. Virupāksha, with the amsa[3] of Nandiswar[4], was born to Kusuma Sresthi couple as the brother of Ambika. Srī Lord Datta kept an amsa of Him in Virupāksha. According to the word given by Her, Ambika, she took birth in Brihat Sila Nagaram and the name Vasavī[5]. Only jnanis[6] know that Srī Vasavī Kanyaka Parameswari was Ambika Herself and that Srīpāda Srīvallabha, the embodied Dattatreya, was Lord Narayana Himself.

1 Today the town of Penugonda
2 The Mother of the World
3 Part, a part of God that has descended and taken to form; an avatar is a complete descent
4 Nandi, the bull, the vehicle of Shiva, his guardian and servant; Nandiswar: Nandi and Ishvara together as a unit
5 Literally: Treasure, a name of Ambika, wealth
6 Sages

"On the full moon day in the month of Sravana[1], Ambika will tie a raksha bandhan[2] to Srīpāda Srīvallabha. This is a divine secret. It is not to be revealed to ordinary people. I revealed this to you only on the order of Srīvallabha. On that day, if anyone has dārshan of the deities in the temples of Ambika or in Datta kshetras, he or she will get the fruit of special merit. Shiva and Keshava[3] are not different. If anyone sees them differently, they will get the fruit of sin. On the day of Ekadasi[4], all sins will be tagged on to food. If one fasts on that day and gives food to a good Brahmin on the next day (Dwadasi[5]) one gets merit. He gets the highest merit if he fasts on Dwadasi day also and then gives food. Along with getting merit, his sins will also get destroyed. If one fasts on Ekadasi, gives food to a suitable Brahmin and also takes food himself on the next day, he will get average fruit. He will get merit, but his sins will not be destroyed. If one fasts on Ekadasi day and takes food himself on Dwadasi without also giving food to a suitable Brahmin, then he will get the lowest fruit. He will get only the minimum merit. Sin will not be destroyed."

In what way can I describe the speciality of the fruit of my merit? I questioned Srī Siddhendra yogi like this. "Maha Prabhu, what was the reason for Ambika to take the name Vasavī? Whom did she give this promise and why did she become Vasavī Kanyaka Parameswari like this? Please show grace on me and reveal this to me."

Srī Siddha Yogindra smiled to my prayer. He said, "My dear, I realize that you have a great interest in listening to the words related to jnana. There is a restriction that divine secrets should be revealed only to those who are inquisitive, qualified and suitable. We should not reveal these to unsuitable, argumentative people and atheists. Blaming divine secrets and divine plays becomes the reason for acquiring sin.

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1 5th month of the Indian year, beginning at the end of July and ending in the 3rd week of August

2 A friendship thread tied at Raksha Bandhan around the wrist of a brother or a sister; Raksha Bandhan is an Indian festival where the love and duties between brothers and sisters are celebrated, also between similar, biologically unrelated relationships.

3 Name for Vishnu

4 11th day of the Indian lunar calendar

5 12th day of the Indian lunar calendar

"Srimannarayana has another name, Upendra[1]. Once Indra asked Srimannarayana, 'Swamī, because you have the name Upendra, you have become my brother. In that case, Ambika should also become my sister. She should also have a name which reminds my name.' Srimannarayana smiled and said, 'Yes, your argument has a good reason. You put this question to Ambika Herself.'

"As time passed, gods killed demons and became arrogant. The time had come to destroy their pride. Ambika took the form of a yaksha[2]. When Vayu deva[3] reached there, the yaksha put a small blade of grass there and asked him to move it. Vayu deva could not move it. Similarly, Agni[4] could not burn it. In this way, the gods became humiliated. But Devendra[5] could recognize that it was not yaksha but the Para tatwam[6] itself. Because Devendra could recognize the Para tatwam, he became great. So, he got the name of Indra. That Para tatwam took the form of Ambika. Indra praised Her with many verses[7]. Pleased with that, Ambika gave a boon to Indra that she would manifest Herself in Kali Yuga in Brihat Sila Nagaram and take the name of Vasavī which would remind Indra's name Vasava. In accordance with that boon, She manifested as Vasavī Kanyaka Prameswari. My dear, *every small incident happens in accordance with time, effect of karma and a reason*. Divine plays cannot be predicted. They cannot be comprehended. Before Srimannarayana took birth to Devaki and Vasudeva as Srī Krishna, Ambika manifested as yoga māya[8]. When Kamsa tried to kill her, she took to the sky with a divine form. In Srī Krishna avatar, the Lord could not get the affection of maternal uncles. But he will get that affection in the avatar of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. *If anybody worships Srīvallabha thinking that He is his child, Srīpāda Srīvallabha will be moving incognito in his house as a small child.*

1 Younger brother of Indra, the celestial king
2 A class of supernatural of beings who have higher powers; in the Indian scriptures, God frequently appears as a yaksha to test the morals of humans. They also guard hidden treasures.
3 God of Wind
4 God of Fire
5 A name of Indra
6 The highest truth; the best of essences
7 Here: Stotras
8 Power of Yoga, which brings forth super-natural phenomena

If somebody worships Vasavī Kanyaka Parameswari thinking that She is their child and shows affectionate devotion, She will be moving incognito as the divine child in their house. Disciples[1] *having pure hearts will hear melodiously the sound of Her anklets.* This is the absolute truth in Kali Yuga. There should not be any doubt.

"Now, you take rest. Always remember the name of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. The sins acquired in many births will be burnt out. You could come here because of the endless grace of Srīpāda Srīvallabha on you." Thus saying, Srī Siddha Yogindra blessed me. Because I was tired, I slept deeply.

I was wondering at my extreme fortune and becoming excited in my mind. I was eager to reach Kuruvapuram quickly and I decided not to leave the holy feet of Srīvallabha.

When I woke up the next morning I was subjected to amazement and astonishment because I was lying at the base of an audumbara tree[2] on a hillock. There was no movement of people in the surroundings. Was my stay during night in the hermitage of Srī Siddhendra Yogi merely a hallucination? Was Srī Siddhendra Yogi a cheat? A magician? Or a devil? Such doubts crept in my mind. The words of Srī Siddha Yogindra about Lord Srī Datta were resounding in my ears. I wondered as to what use it would be for Srīpāda Srīvallabha to keep me in such a predicament. Many thoughts were crossing in my mind. I collected my belongings and resumed my journey.

My journey continued from morning till noon. I saw a village with small houses. The pangs of hunger increased and troubled me. I am a Brahmin and can take meals only in the house of Brahmins. I cannot take meals elsewhere. I thought of preparing the meals myself if someone provides the materials. Then I can eat such food. I got a doubt whether any Brahmins were living in the village. So, I asked some villagers about it. One of them said, "Sir, we are a hill tribe. I am the chief of this hamlet. There are no Brahmins in our village. You can accept fruits and honey from us if you have no objection." There is an adage that one can behave like a low caste Shūdra[3] during travels. Therefore, I considered that it was not

1 Here: Sadhakas

2 Very sacred Indian fig tree (Ficus racemosa); the audumbara tree is seen to carry the energy of Jupiter, the guru vibration, causing extension of consciousness.

3 The working class of the ancient Indian society

wrong to accept anything offered by anybody during the course of travel. They placed before me fruits and honey from the hills in those ravines. When I was about to eat, a crow came from somewhere and started pecking me on my head. I tried to drive it away but in vain. In the meanwhile, some more crows gathered. They started pecking my body in all spots in a wanton manner. I was panic-stricken and began to run. Those crows were chasing me. There was no one in that village who could help me. The chief of the village said, "Oh, what a strange thing! In our area, crows do not harm anyone. We wonder why these crows are so ferocious and obstinate to harm you. You must have abused or dishonoured a siddha purusha[1] . You are undergoing this punishment because of his curse. If we are to obstruct the course of punishment, we would have to incur the wrath of that sage. So, we will not try to change the course of divine play. Please do not misunderstand." After saying this, the chief kept quiet.

I could not take the fruits and honey given to me. My body became blood stained. The crows chased and injured me even though I was running. I felt extremely sad at my dismal state. Did Srī Siddha Yogindra curse me because I doubted him? But he had blessed me that I would have the fortune of seeing Srīpāda Srīvallabha! Probably, I cannot have the dārshan of Lord Srī Datta unless all my sins accumulated from past births are completely destroyed! I do not know how many sinful deeds I had amassed! How many punishments like this I have to suffer if all those sins are to be washed out! Oh! Are so many difficulties and dangers involved in the blessings bestowed for the dārshan of Srīvallabha? Oh God! How many punishments you still want to inflict on me! Now, who can save me? Srīpāda Srīvallabha! Save me! Save me! Saranu[2]! Saranu! Srīpāda Srīvallabha! With such thoughts of absolute surrender, I slowly reached the root portion of an audumbara tree. I thought that the audumbara tree, which is the residing centre of Lord Srī Datta, would protect me, but the sport of Lord Srī Datta ran contrary to my hope. An unprecedented foul smell was spreading from my body. Attracted by that odious odour or by the irony of fate, big poisonous snakes were coming in a row quickly. They were biting me and leaving quickly. I was troubled by crows before. Now, my entire body became poisonous because of the bites from venomous serpents. Foam was coming out

1 Great saint
2 Seeking shelter, refuge

from my mouth. The strength of my heart began to decline. I thought that I was sure to die at any moment.

It was evening dusk. Some washermen were going that way. They washed, dried and bundled the dried clothes. They kept the bundles on the backs of donkeys and were going. They noticed my miserable plight, but they hesitated to touch me for some time, because I am a Brahmin. As delay might endanger my life, they regarded saving a life was of prime importance. Hence, they seated me on a donkey and took me to their village. For me, all troublesome incidents were taking place in a procession on that day. The washermen took me to the colony of cobblers. One of those tanners had knowledge of medicine relating to poison. They kept me on a cot, the bottom of which was laced with cords. The premises smelled badly. That cobbler-physician made juice from some wild herbs. He made me drink that juice. He tied some leaves at the locations where the snakes had bitten me. He plucked some tender leaves from an audumbara tree. Juice-like milk was flowing from those leaves. He kept the stems of those leaves in my two ears. I was getting terrible pain. I tried to get up and run away. Two strong men held me firmly. I was helpless. That physician instructed his assistants, "The poison will come into the audumbara leaves. After that, you have to burn those poisonous leaves. The man will cry much louder as the poison increasingly gets transferred to the audumbara leaves. So, you hold him firmly."

After some time, the poison was neutralised. I became healthy. I stayed in the house of the cobbler all throughout the night. The cobbler was singing during the whole night "Datta Digambarā! Datta Digambarā! Srīpāda Vallabha Datta Digambarā!" I was lying on the cot. My heart swelled on hearing the extremely melodious names of the Lord. My love for the cobbler enhanced because he became my co-disciple of our guru due to the spiritual relationship. In the next moment, I was pained with the realisation that I was born in a superior Brahmin caste and that he was a low caste cobbler.

The teaching of a cobbler called Vallabha Das to Shankar Bhatt

After completing the singing, the cobbler came to me. The compassion was overflowing from his eyes. His two eyes were suggesting the experi-

ence of self. A doubt crept in my mind whether he was some yogi. He turned to me and said, "Sir, my name is Vallabha Das. I am an artisan working with the hides of animals. I was born in a low caste. There is no doubt about it. Nevertheless, I want to tell you some information. I already knew that your name is Shankar Bhatt and that you are travelling to visit Srīpāda Srīvallabha. Not only that. I also know why you were harassed by crows and snakes on the way."

I was astonished. I thought that he probably studied astrology and acquired some proficiency in the subject. Vallabha Das said immediately, "Sir, I am not an astrologer. *Srī Kshetra Pīthikapuram is the birthplace of great scholars. It is the holy place where Sānga Vedārdha Samrat Pandit*[1] *Malladi Bapannāvadhāni actually lived. The Vedas became tired in the process attempting to describe the Supreme Being. They could not pinpoint the phenomenon correctly and simply ruled out everything by saying, 'this is not, this is not'. Such is the nature of the Supreme Being. Pithapuram is the sacred place where that Supreme Phenomenon took birth as Srīpāda Srīvallabha. Dry philosophy and meaningless debates cannot earn the grace of Srīpāda Srīvallabha.*

"There is no need for scholarly excellence to obtain the mercy of Srīpāda. On the other hand, pedantic pride will throw us far away from Him.

"The crows that pecked at you were great pandits who lived in Pithapuram during their previous lives. They could not recognise the divine nature of Srīvallabha and they could not realise Him as Lord Datta. Thus, they wasted their whole lives. They could recite Vedas upside down, but what is the use? They were repeating words like krama, ghana, jata, swadhya and exhibiting their arrogance. After death they went to heaven. Indra praised them. He showered praise on them by saying, 'Oh, you are kramānta, you are ghanāpati, you are jati[2]. Oh, you are an expert in tarka[3]. What a fortune! How many hundreds and thousands of times you have recited Veda? What a merit! What a merit! Only because of that

1 An emperor in the Vedic lore
2 Words relating to the kind and complexity of the recitation of the Vedas; examples for the arrogance of the scholars
3 Arguing

merit, you could step into swarga[1].' All the denizens of Indra Loka[2] admired them sky-high. However, these pandits suffered the pangs of hunger. Divine ambrosia was available in heaven. They heard that one is freed from hunger and thirst by drinking it. They submitted their problem directly to Indra as none paid any heed to them. To that Indra replied, 'Veda is the form of the Lord's inhalation and exhalation. The Lord is infinite and deathless. Therefore, Vedas are also infinite. Vedas are the basis for all dharmas[3]. By chanting Vedas you have praised the Lord. As a reward for it we, the celestials, are also praising you highly. Otherwise, is it possible for you to get encomiums from me? *If one desires food, he must provide food to others. If one donates a grain, we, the celestials, enhance it to thousand grains and return them to the donor as a reward.* When you have not donated anything how can we help? Because of your Vedic recitation, you derived immense benefit. Therefore, you can reside freely in Indra Loka as long as it exists. Afterwards, you can go to another world. In this way you can remain eternally free.'

"Those who heard the words of Indra faced a difficult situation. It occurred to them that living eternally without food and suffering prolonged hunger and thirst and it was indeed an unbearable punishment. Indra said again, 'You lived in the holy Pādagaya kshetra[4], but you performed annual ceremonies to the manes[5] of your ancestors without care and concern. You were always calculating the expenditure incurred for such functions. You were also absorbed in the thought that you were eating delicious food items, but you were devoid of the care and devotion required for the performance of those solemn ceremonies. As a result, your forefathers did not attain noble positions after their death. Your heirs are also behaving like that. Your children also did lament that you lived too long and a large amount of money was wasted on medical facilities provided to you. They even wondered, 'Oh, how much food was wasted?' Srīman Nārayana[6] Himself incarnated as Srīpāda Srīvallabha in the midst of you. When He was showing the way for salvation, you abused Him. You indulged in fruit-

1 Divine world to which you get access for a certain time through good deeds
2 World of Indra
3 Ethical principles
4 Pithapuram, as the place where the feet of the asura (demon) Gaya fell
5 Souls
6 The highest God

less and counter-arguments. Even though all the auspicious traits like omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence and qualities of an incarnation were clearly visible, you became blind people who could not recognise Srīpāda Srīvallabha as an avatar of Srī Datta. It is ordained that you remain as crows in the forms of the manes of your ancestors till you drink the blood of a person whose body was purified by the chanting of the sacred name of Srīpāda Srīvallabha.'" Srī Vallabha Das said, "Shankar Bhatt, it was for that reason they were born as crows and on account of their previous merit they drank your blood and obtained noble status."

Then I noticed that Vallabha Das was not an ordinary person and that the grace of Srīpāda Srīvallabha was completely on him. Srī Vallabha Das added, "Sir, the serpents who were attracted by the scent emanating from your body attained salvation."

I said, "Sir, great Vallābhā Das, why should this incident take place? If my body were to be used as food for crows, serpents and other living creatures, it would be a harrowing experience for me. I am under constant fear of being attacked by any creature at any time."

Srī Vallabha Das said, "Sir, this is all a sportive play of Srīpāda. Don't have such fear. Such accidents would not take place in the future.

"Only the One who gives life will have the authority to take out life. Therefore, such authority is not vested in anyone except God.

"However, some of your ancestors worshipped goddess Kāli on the burial ground. With the help of the mantra used, they killed many persons whom they disliked. They earned great sin because they were responsible for the unnatural deaths of those people. Due to that sin, they took birth as snakes, but as you were also born in their family, you were all blood relatives. Moreover, you obtained the mercy of Srīpāda. Because of this small merit, this incident took place and they got salvation.

"A Brahmin should be a seeker of truth. A Kshatriya[1] should be bound by dharma. A Vaishya[2] should attend to cultivation, protection of cattle, and be skilled in the sale and purchase activities. Therefore, he should be a calm person. A Shūdra should be a loving one and render services. Even then *there is no distinction between caste, creed, rich and poor for the grant of divine grace*. A Brahmin can follow the duty of Kshatriya and can

1 Member of the class of rulers or warriors

2 Member of the class of merchants and cattle breeders

become a king. When a Kshatriya desires knowledge of Brahman, he can adopt the duty of a Brahmin. Had not Kusuma Sresthi, who was a Vaishya, chosen Kshatriya dharma and became a ruler? According to Brahmanic dharma, killing an enemy is sinful, but in Kshatriya dharma it is a prescribed duty. You are a Brahmin and a seeker of truth. Therefore, non-violence is a supreme duty for you, but not for a butcher.

"So, if a man wants to get proper results from his actions, he should perform the duties according to the dharma adopted by him irrespective of the caste to which he belongs.

"As you are at present ill, it is desirable and necessary that you should be with a doctor. That is why you were brought to me. *Please note that Srīpāda Srīvallabha will observe us every moment.* In your childhood you were reciting the prayers about Lord Vishnu. You were prattling with your friends in a funny manner; it is indeed a prayer for Lord Ganesha. For the words in the sloka

'Suklāmbaradharam Vishnum Sasivarnam Chaturbhujam
Prasannavadanam Dhyāyet Sarva Vighnopa Shāntaye'[1]

you were giving a perverted interpretation for the sake of fun; you were giving the following meanings:

Suklāmbaradharam	= that which bears white clothes,
Vishnum	= that which is everywhere,
Sasivarnam	= white ash coloured,
Chaturbhujam	= four legs instead of four hands,
Prasannavadanam	= (i) the donkey will have a gracious face when it brays,
	(ii) the donkey will kick people with its hind legs.
Dhyāyet	= so its face is only pleasant to look at,
Sarva Vighnopa Shāntaye	= (I pray) for abatement of all obstacles.

"In this way you were jokingly giving a perverse meaning to that holy prayer and extended its meaning as a prayer applicable to a donkey.

1 A prayer sung at the beginning of auspicious occasions: 'You are clad in white, oh all-pervading One, and radiating with the colour of the Moon, with four arms, you the all-knowing One. I meditate on your ever-smiling face and pray, please remove all obstacles from my way.'

Shankar Bhatt, Lord Datta is a skilled one. The Lord, in His presence, would also rectify the mistakes made by you for fun. The washermen brought you to me on a donkey. At that time, you were covered with dust and bore an ashen colour. You came here with halting pace and sometimes you walked on all your fours, (two hands and two legs) supporting yourself on your hands placed on the ground. Even though you came to the audumbara tree on all your fours gasping for breath, you could not avoid the accident. Your hope of escaping from the serpents was belied in this way. You had a placid countenance if you did not convulse with pain. At last you were brought to the village of cobblers. In subjecting you to so many miseries, Srīpāda provided entertainment and taught you a lesson. Those tanners were freed from their ignoble births. You were teaching the prayer-sloka of Srī Vishnu to your friends in a jocular manner. That is the reason why you have come to a position where you have to hear the teaching of a low caste person like me. Now you are here. Tomorrow you may stay in the house of your own caste people. If you disclose this incident even by mistake, they will ostracize you."

With the good teaching of Srī Vallabha Das, the Brahmanic arrogance in me decreased. The feeling that Vallabha Das was a pariah disappeared. I had brotherly love for him as if he was my blood relation. I accepted the hospitality of Vallabha Das for two or three days and left the village afterwards.

What can I describe about the mercy of Srīvallabha? I was involved in very strange circumstances in a town called Vichitrapuram and came out in a strange way.

When I was going on foot from Vichitrapuram, some royal servants approached me with humble obedience and inquired whether I was a Vaishnava[1] or a Shaiva[2]. I told them that we were smārthas who observe no distinction between Shiva and Keshava[3], but we show some inclination towards Shivaism and that the pontiff of the Southern monastery Srī Sringeri Shankaracharya was our preceptor. They requested me to visit their king. I went with them for the royal audience. On the way, I understood some peculiar matters. That king was inviting any Brahmin who was

1 Devotee of Vishnu
2 Devotee of Shiva
3 Name for Vishnu

seen on that day and was questioning, "If this-much is for that-much, how-much will be for this-much?" No one could give a satisfactory answer to that question. That king conducted a sacrifice some years ago to beget sons. Fortunately, he got a son. However, from that day Brahmins faced peculiar troubles, as the son born to the king became a mute. The king was of the opinion that because of the defective sacrifice performed by the Brahmins, his son became mute. Therefore, the king got the heads of Shaivaite Brahmins completely shaved, marked their faces with the paint of vertical Vaishnavite lines and paraded them on the back of donkeys. Likewise, he got the heads of Vaishnavite Brahmins cleanly shaved, marked their faces with horizontal lines made of holy ash, and paraded them seated on the back of donkeys. This situation became unbearable to both Shaivas and Vaishnavas. The king suddenly began to behave in a quixotic fashion. He was donating thotakura[1] liberally to the Brahmins. He ordered that thotakura should be cultivated in a large acreage of the cultivable land. He was collecting half of the taxes in the form of thotakura. Cart loads of thotakura were collected and kept in the fort. Thotakura was donated in very large quantities and Brahmins could not consume it fully. The cooking of rice and the eating of other victuals was forbidden for the Brahmins. After eating cooked thotakura in the main meals, they had to eat cooked or uncooked thotakura as a snack.

What can the poor Brahmins do? All the Brahmins who took great pride as scholars in logic, scholars in philosophy and scholars in Purānas[2] shed their arrogance and were praying to God silently and pitiably to redress their plight. There was a devotee of Datta who was an ardent follower of Datta sect among the Brahmins. He said that Lord Dattatreya becomes merciful at mere remembrance and that only the Lord can remove their miserable condition. Therefore, all the Brahmins observed mandala dīksha[3] and started worshipping Lord Dattatreya.

As his son was mute, the king wanted to encourage the sign language for the mute. He instructed the raja-guru[4] to write a book on the sign language for the mute. That preceptor of the royal court was formerly

1 Green leafy vegetable; amaranth
2 Old Hindu texts with religious stories of quasi-legendary content
3 A spiritual discipline for forty days
4 Preceptor of the king

very haughty. He was in a very miserable state and undertook extensive research in the sign language.

The discussion between Shankar Bhatt and Maharaja

I was taken before the king. I was perspiring profusely. I thought about the rigorous tests Srīpāda Srīvallabha imposed upon me. I was mentally chanting the name of Srīpāda without any pause. I was getting courage that I never possessed before. The king posed the same question that he asked all the people. He asked me, "If that-much becomes this-much, how much this-much becomes?" I replied solemnly, "This-much only for this-much." The king was taken aback and said, "Mahātmā, you are great. I am blessed to see you. Only recently I had recollection of the knowledge about my past lives. I was a very poor Brahmin in my previous birth. I was growing thotakura in my house. I was offering it freely to all those who asked for it. The Brahmins who received it from me were all wealthy and did not suffer from want of food and water. They simply took the vegetable gratis from me, but they did not cooperate with me on any day. They did not show any mercy on me. Whenever they were deputing me on their behalf for annual ceremonies of ancestors or for marriages, the householders used to give me large amounts of money and presents. Out of this, the people who were deputing me were snatching 99 percent and releasing one percent for me. The labour was mine and the reward was theirs. In addition, they were getting a free supply of thotakura from my house. I was suffering from acute poverty, but I continued to donate thotakura as usual. Those Brahmins were saying that the vegetable was very tasty and that no harm would happen by eating it daily.

"The circle of time rotated swiftly. As I was donating thotakura in spite of my abject poverty, I am born as a king in this birth. Those Brahmins who received that green vegetable from me took birth as Brahmins in my kingdom. In this way I was born many times richer and greater than them. By donating thotakura, I became a king. So, I am donating greater quantities of that vegetable in cart loads. So, I am asking everyone what would be the magnificent state I would achieve in the future as a result of my present donations. Only you gave the correct answer to my peculiar ques-

tion." The king concluded his speech. Then I explained, "Rajā, thotakura was very valuable under the circumstances of your previous life, but considering your present exalted position, its value is negligible. Being in a position to donate diamonds, precious stones and gold, you are still donating thotakura. So, however much you donate of that green leafy vegetable, you cannot get anything more except one hundred times of that thotakura." The king was very pleased with my reply. It gave great relief to my mind that for a casual reply of mine the king gave an account of his previous life. I felt that thanks to the great grace of Srīpāda the dishonour of riding a donkey was avoided. I had already mounted a donkey for misinterpreting the sacred verse 'Suklāmbaradharam Vishnum' for fun in my childhood. I offered salutations in my mind to Srīpāda who saved me from riding a donkey in a disgraceful condition.

Then started the second test. The test was held in the sign language for the mute, which was very dear to the king. The raja-guru[1] began to examine me. Showing his fingers, the raja-guru questioned me with signs whether it was one or two. I thought that he was asking me whether I came alone or I was accompanied by anyone. I replied with signs showing one finger that I came singly. Then he showed me three fingers. That suggested to me about Lord Dattatreya. I assumed that he was inquiring whether I was a devotee of Datta. I felt that devotion should be kept as a secret. So, I showed a closed fist and conveyed the message that it was a secret matter, which belongs to the innermost heart. For that, the raja-guru offered sweets requesting me with gestures to accept. I refused to accept and I showed a pack of flattened rice. I took some flattened rice from the bundle and gave it to them. My idea was that I like flattened rice more than sweets and that they could also partake them.

Then the raja-guru in a profound voice praised, "Rajā, he is a great pandit. It is already known that he is a great Vedic scholar who mastered all Vedas. He is also a great expert in the sign language for the deaf." All of this was perplexing to me. Then raja-guru told the king, "Rajā, I asked him whether Shiva and Keshava[2] are one or if they are different. Showing one finger he said that both are one. I showed him three fingers indicating that Trinity Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara exist differently. He replied by

1 The guru of the king
2 Name for Vishnu

showing his closed fist and questioned, 'Are not the five fingers of the hand existing collectively as one?' I offered him sweets requesting him to accept me as his disciple. Thereupon he indicated that he is not bothered with disciples and that he leads a contented life like Kuchela[1]. Saying so, he turned down my request and gave me parched and flattened rice." I was astonished. Oh! I wondered how vastly varied the methods of understanding minds and thoughts in the world are. Then came the third and final examination. Raja-guru was reading the mantras from Rudra Chamaka[2] and wanted me to explain their meaning. Remembering Srīvallabha, I began to expatiate their meaning according to my perfunctory knowledge.

- "Ekachame means number 1. Trisrachame means number 3 added to the previous 1, it is 4 and its mathematical root is 2.
- Panchachame is the addition of 5 to the previously arrived 4 that gives 9 and its mathematical root is 3.
- Saptachame signifies the addition of 7 to the already arrived number 9. The total is 16 and the root of it is 4.
- Navachame means adding 9 to the already derived number 16. The total works out to 25 and the root is 5.
- Ekadasachame involves the addition of 11 to the number 25 already worked out. The total is 36 and its root is 6.
- Trayodasachame is the addition of 13 to the previous 36. The total comes to 49 and its mathematical root is 7.
- Panchadasachame means the addition of 15 to the number 49. The total is 64 and its root is 8.
- Saptadasachame is 17 + 64 = 81 and the mathematical root is 9.

The other factors are as following:

- *Navadasachame* – 19 + 81 = 100 its root is 10
- *Ekavingsatischame* – 21 + 100 = 121 its root is 11
- *Trayvingsatischame* – 23 + 121 = 144 its root is 12
- *Panchavingsatischame* – 25 + 144 = 169 its root is 13
- *Saptavingsatischame* – 27 + 169 = 196 its root is 14

1 A friend of Krishna from childhood who lived very contented; the meaning of the word is 'one who is hardly closed'

2 Verses from 'Rudrādhya' invoking the blessing of Rudra for grant of various desires

- *Navavingsatischame* – 29 + 196 = 225 its root is 15
- *Ekatriyamsatischame* – 31 + 225 = 256 its root is 16"

The above details are shown in the following way for better understanding:

Ekachame	01	+ 000	=	001	its root is	01
Trisrachame	03	+ 001	=	004	its root is	02
Panchachame	05	+ 004	=	009	its root is	03
Saptachame	07	+ 009	=	016	its root is	04
Navachame	09	+ 016	=	025	its root is	05
Ekadasachame	11	+ 025	=	036	its root is	06
Trayodasachame	13	+ 036	=	049	its root is	07
Panchadasachame	15	+ 049	=	064	its root is	08
Saptadasachame	17	+ 064	=	081	its root is	09
Navadasachame	19	+ 081	=	100	its root is	10
Ekavingsatischame	21	+ 100	=	121	its root is	11
Trayovingsatischame	23	+ 121	=	144	its root is	12
Panchavingsatischame	25	+ 144	=	169	its root is	13
Saptavingsatischame	27	+ 169	=	196	its root is	14
Navavingsatischame	29	+ 196	=	225	its root is	15
Ekatriyamsatischame	31	+ 225	=	256	its root is	16

I explained in the foregoing manner the mathematical mysteries enshrined in the Vedic mantras of Rudra Chamaka[1]. My explanation was highly appreciated by the scholars of the court. I was amazed at my own explanation. Again, I added, "All this is about the mystery of atoms responsible for Creation. This was known to Sage Kānāda. Various metals form according to the different arrangement of the number of atoms." On account of the great mercy of Srīpāda Srīvallabha I came out of the Vichitrapuram in a strange way in the above manners.

1 Modern concepts of arithmetical progression, geometric progression and other scientific formulae are to be found in the Vedic texts

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 3

Encounter with Palaniswami — Visit to Kuruvapuram

The efficacy of constant meditation about Srīpāda Srīvallabha

I resumed my travel from Vichitrapuram only due to the mercy of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. My mind was eager to visit Parameswara[1] in Chidambaram. My travel continued for three days in a happy way. I was getting food without asking for it. On the fourth day, I stood at the threshold of a Brahmin's house and begged for food. A ferocious housewife came out of the house and yelled that there was no food. I waited for some time outside the house. The householder came out and said, "I am not fortunate enough to extend hospitality to guests and visitors. My wife is a great shrew. When she gets angry she breaks earthen pots on my head. In this matter, my wife and the wife of my guru stand on an equal footing. However, there is one difference. My wife demands from me the cost of pots broken, but the wife of my guru does not harass him in that manner. Just now some pots were broken on my head. There is no dearth of food and water in our house, but I must compulsorily reimburse the cost of broken pots immediately. This is very troublesome to me. If I could get some money distributed during religious functions as sambhāvana[2], today there would be no trouble. If it is not possible then I must borrow the money from someone. I can only repay the loan whenever I get money through sambhāvanas. Out of the money received by way of sambhāvanas, I use a portion of it for the repayment of debts and the rest is handed over to her. This system continued for some time. However, in the recent times, she is taking away all the amount of sambhāvanas. Therefore, I am not able to repay the loans. People who know my position are no longer coming forward to offer me any loan. They are asking me, 'How will you repay the loans? Are you thinking that you can repay the debts when you receive money through sambhāvanas?' That way

1 The highest God
2 Monetary compensation, fee

is also closed now. As I am rich, no one is giving any donation. Moreover, they are ridiculing me. I must now pay the cost of broken pots. After scolding you sharply, my wife called me inside the house and said, 'There is a pilgrim in the street. You go along with him and bring a donation received at any place. Then only you will receive food in the house.'" Then that henpecked husband told me that he would come along with me. He said that he knew very well all the houses of the Brahmins in the village and that they might get meals as well as money as dakshina[1]. I was taken aback. I thought "Srīpadā! Srīvallabhā! What is this horrible test?" I went to each and every house in that village of Brahmins along with that Brahmin. No one offered any meals, not to speak of offering any financial help. Then that Brahmin who accompanied me lamented, "Till now I am only unlucky. As you joined with me, your fortune was also lost and you also became unlucky." Then I told him *"Srī Dattatreya is the omnipotent Lord who provides food to all creatures! He dwells in Kuruvapuram in this Kali Yuga*[2] *assuming the name and form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha*. I am going there to see Him. Let us sit at the foot of that audumbara tree chanting His name. Let us leave it to the mercy of Srī Datta."

The Brahmin agreed to that. Hunger was scorching in the stomach. We were chanting the name of Srīpāda Srīvallabha in a feeble voice. While we were continuing the chant of the name of Srīpāda, servitors of the king of Vichitrapuram approached us and submitted, "Sirs, the yuvarāja[3] is now able to speak. His muteness was removed. The king ordered us to immediately bring you. Therefore, you please come along with us." I could not disclose our miserable plight to those royal servants. I told them that I could not come alone and that they should take my companion also along with me. The servants of the king agreed to that. They took us with all respect seated on the backs of horses. Seeing this, the residents of the agrahāram[4] were utterly amazed.

The king said, "Mahātmā, even after knowing that you are a great scholar, I sent you with empty hands without honouring you. After you left, the prince fell unconscious. We did a number of services to him. After a

1 Monetary offering
2 Dark age
3 Dauphin, crown prince
4 Village inhabited mainly by Brahmins

long time, he opened his eyes and began uttering 'Srīpāda Srīvallabha Digambarā! Srī Dattadeva Digambarā!' The prince disclosed that a very tall, extremely handsome yogi of sixteen years appeared and placed holy ash in his mouth. Who is that yogi? Where is his residence? What is the relationship between Lord Srī Datta and that yogi? Kindly tell us."

I submitted with humility, "In what way can I describe the glory of Srīpāda Srīvallabha? He is actually an incarnation of Lord Datta. His form of incarnation is very extraordinary as that of the incarnation of Srī Krishna. What I heard about Him is only very little. I am travelling to Kuruvapuram to have His dārshan. I am visiting sacred places and holy men on the way."

The learned people of Vichitrapuram wondered at this strange happening. They praised Srīpāda Srīvallabha in various ways because the king now got his good nature back, they were rid of the troubles, and that their yuvarāja's mutism was cured on account of their austerities for forty days.

The king honoured me with a donation of gold. The king's preceptor said, "Sir, wisdom dawned on me after so many days. I realised that Shaivaites by abusing Vishnu and Vaishnavites by abusing Shiva are only amassing sin and that no purpose is served. As a result of our abusing of God, we experienced all troubles. With or without knowing, we observed austerities for forty days for propitiating Lord Datta, thanks to the advice of Mādhavā Nambūdri. We are very indebted to you."

When we took leave of them, Mādhavā Nambūdri also expressed his resolve to come along with us. We agreed. We three returned to the village of my Brahmin friend. We distributed the gold given to us by the king to the Brahmins of that agrahāram. After receiving gold, my friend's termagant wife offered us food. Afterwards, she became a devotee of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. She turned docile, leaving her previous termagant temperament.

Mādhavā Nambūdri and I travelled towards Chidambaram. Sage Agastya appointed Parabrahma Sastry, a resident of Ryali village situated in the Godavari region, for the priesthood of Dharma Sāsta Ayyappa Deva[1]. In the course of time, Vedic scholars from the village Nambūru of Gartapuri[2] were invited by the royal families ruling Malayala Desa[3]. Many Brahmins

1 Ayyappa is Dharma Sāsta, born out of the union of Shiva and the female Mohini form of Vishnu
2 Today: Guntur
3 Modern Kerala

left Nambūru and propagated Vedic knowledge in Malayala Desa. These people are called Nambūdri Brahmins. The ancestors of Ādi Shankara[1] also belonged to Nambūru. Nambūdri Brahmins are famous for their religious observances and traditions, discipline and devotion, proficiency in mantra, tantra and yantra practices, but Mādhavā Nambūdri was an unlettered one. He was eking out his livelihood working as a cook in the houses of some Brahmins. He lost his parents in childhood. Close relatives did not help him. He had an unshakable devotion towards Lord Datta. After hearing about the incarnation of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, he was eager to visit Him as soon as possible.

We heard that there were some great siddhas near Chidambaram. We visited Srī Palaniswami, an old hermit leading a solitary life in the hills. When we arrived at the entrance of the cave of Srī Palaniswami, he saw us and greeted us, "Both Mādhavā and Shankar are coming together? What a fortune!" We realised that he was a great siddhā who could call us by our names even without any acquaintance. Merciful Srī Swamī said, "My sons, it is time to cast off this body and enter into a youthful body in accordance with the command of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. The age of this body is 300 years. It is the order of Srīpāda that I should leave this body and live for another 300 years in a new body. *Even the liberated ones during life, and those who crossed the circle of birth-death order of Creation, should return when Srīpāda orders them to come back! The great resolve that administers the entire Creation has incarnated in the form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. His descent will always take place in the subtle worlds of higher regions. To come in human form is rather rare. His is a comprehensive yogic incarnation. Incarnations emerging from a fraction of His infinite powers always take place on this earth to protect devotees.* My son Shankara, you have mentioned about Sage Kānāda and his theory of atoms in Vichitrapuram. Please explain in detail."

The theory of atoms propounded by Sage Kānāda

I said, "Swamī, please excuse me. I know very little about Sage Kānāda and his theory of atoms." Whatever I said in Vichitrapuram came out of

1 A great Vedic teacher

my mouth without any effort from me. Swamī also knows that," I replied.

Compassionate Srī Palaniswami explained in the following manner: "The entire Creation is made up of superior atoms. Due to the existence of particles much finer than atoms, electrical current flows get generated. Just as the various planets rotate in different orbits around Sun, these finer particles rotate with incredible velocity around their central point in their respective orbits. All the emotional vibrations of living creatures are much subtler than the finer particles. Nothing will remain constant in this pulsating universe. Change is its nature. Changing every moment is its natural trait. The consciousness of Lord Datta is much finer and subtler than the above vibrations. Obtaining His grace is easy and also difficult. When each atom or particle is divided ad infinitum, each part of the atom becomes equivalent to a void. The combination of infinite Maha Sūnyās[1] results in this Creation. Just as matter is created, anti-matter, which is entirely opposed to matter, also exists. When these two get mixed, the anti-matter is extinguished. Matter can change its qualities and properties. *The idols of worship become alive and active after the ritual of initation of life force is performed. Then they are rendered capable of fulfilling the desires of devotees.* All mantras originate in kundalini. The Gayatri mantra also manifested in it.

"People think that Gayatri mantra has three lines, but there is a fourth line for the Gayatri mantra. It is 'parorajasi sāvadom'. This four-lined Gayatri mantra indicates formless Brahman[2]. Kundalini shakti[3] creates this universe with 24 traits. There are 24 letters in Gayatri as well. Number 24 is also called Gokulam. 'Go' stands for 2 and 'kulam' stands for 4. The form of Brahman is beyond all changes and therefore, it is indicated by the number 9. Number 8 is a form of Maha Māya[4]. Srīpāda Srīvallabha was asking people whom He liked, 'Do Chowpāti Dev Lakshmi.' Parabrahma is the Lord of all. He is the Pati of all. So, the Lord Patidev stands for number 9, Lakshmi stands for number 8, Do stands for number 2, and Chow represents number 4. Instead of asking for two chapāthis[5], He was asking strangely in a

1 Great voids
2 The absolute God; the highest Lord
3 Power of Kundalini (serpent power)
4 Great illusion
5 Cakes made of wheat flour

non-grammatical manner 'Do Chowpāti Dev Lakshmi.' In this manner He was reminding the living beings about the mysterious number 2498. The Parabrahman and the Parāshakti[1] of the Gokulam reside in the form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. *Please note that Lord Srī Krishna is Srīvallabha Himself.* We recognise that the Gayatri mantra took the shape of His formless sandals.

"My son Shankarā, twelve kinds of variations exist in the gross human body. The gross body, which can be experienced by all, is subjected to the influence of the gross Sun. Through the practice of the kriya yoga discipline, one can obtain bodies with more and more subtler variations. These bodies of twelve different variations are under the influence of Dwādasa Ādityas[2]. *However, as Srīvallabha is far superior to Dwādasa* Ādityas*, His divine gross body is endowed with wonderful divine vibrations.*

*"Even before His descent with a human body in Pīthikapuram, Srīvallabha arrived in this place 108 years ago. He blessed me. He came here in the same form as He is now in Kuruvapuram.*Where is the end to His divine plays? Sometime after Srīvallabha came here, great sages of the Himalayas worshipped Srī Badari Narayana in the great holy place Badari with Brahmakamala flowers[3]. I observed that all those Brahmakamala flowers were falling on the auspicious feet of Srīpāda. He is beyond time and space." Srī Palaniswami concluded his narration.

I had an undefinable experience on hearing the sacred sayings of Srī Palaniswami. I requested him, "Swamī, what are Brahmakamalas? Where are they available? I gather from your words that Lord Datta would be elated if worshipped with them. Kindly clear my doubts."

Description of Brahmakamala flowers

Srī Palaniswami in reply to my query extended his merciful looks on me and said, "Srī Maha Vishnu worshipped Sadashiva with Brahmakamalas. That which was mentioned as the lotus springing from the navel of Srī Maha Vishnu is also Brahmakamala. *If Srī Datta is worshipped with lotus flowers, material and spiritual wealth will be achieved.* As replicas of

1 The supreme primordial force
2 Twelve sons of Āditi, the highest light; solar gods
3 Saussurea obvallata, Nightblooming Cereus, Indian species

the Brahmakamalas in the celestial world, Brahmakamalas are found on earth in the Himalayas at an altitude of 12,000 feet. These blossoms bloom once a year. My son, they bloom only during midnight. This is another wonder. When it blooms, an excellent fragrance wafts over the entire area. All the great spiritual aspirants in the Himalayas eagerly wait for days and months to witness this rare spectacle. The flowers remain buried in snow from autumn to spring season. In the beginning of Chaitra[1] month, the flowers spring out of the snow. The process of blooming takes place during the entire summer. The flowers fully bloom during midnight by the time of Sravana Suddha Pūrnima[2]. It is at this time that the snowy Shiva linga of Amarnath becomes visible. My dear Shankarā, this wonderful miracle takes place now and forever for the benefit of spiritual seekers, great sages and siddhas living in the Himalayas. *All sins get destroyed by looking at the Brahmakamalas. Obstacles to yoga cease. This miracle confers instantaneous results. Therefore, yogis and ascetics attain higher status in their respective paths. After it blooms, the Brahmakamala flower disappears; after all, those who were destined to see it had completely seen it.*

"My son Shankarā, I want to remain in complete penance for ten days. If any distressed people come here, yourself and Mādhavā have to arrange for their dārshan without causing disturbance to my deep meditation. If any dead one bitten by a snake is brought here, tell the people who brought the body as my order that they should leave the body in the waters of a river or that they should bury the corpse in the earth."

Srī Palaniswami seated there went into a samādhi through penance. Mādhavā and I were arranging his dārshan to distressed devotees in a calm manner. Some of the devotees supplied us with food materials. Mādhavā said that he would start cooking with the fallen branch of a coconut tree nearby. I agreed. Mādhavā went with another person. As irony of fate would have it, a cobra hiding behind the bough of the coconut tree had bitten Mādhavā when he lifted the coconut branch to carry it. Three persons brought Mādhavā to the cave.

1 Nakshatra constellation in the month of Aries

2 The full moon day of the first fortnight of the month Sravana, the 5th month of the Indian year beginning around the end of July and ending in the 3rd week of August

As the command of swami cannot be violated, I buried the body of Mādhavā. People of that place cooperated with me. I sobbed. Mādhavā's pure heart, pure devotion and unshakable faith on Srīpāda Srīvallabha came to my mind and I became very much perturbed. I consoled myself that destiny could not be avoided. After this sad incident, I witnessed another unfortunate incident. The relatives of a young eighteen year old person brought his dead body. They were crying and shouting with sorrow. The youth also died of snake bite. I informed that swami was in yoga samādhi and that they should bury the body in accordance with the orders of swami. The devotees there informed the visitors that my friend also died in a similar manner and that his body was also buried following the orders of swami. The distressed people became crestfallen and were blaming their misfortune in many ways. Under the unavoidable conditions, they buried the new youth.

Every day three or four people used to visit swami. They used to see swami who was in a state of samādhi in a calm manner and were leaving without any disturbance. Ten days passed like this. On the eleventh day, in the Brāhmi Muhurtha[1], Srī Palaniswami became fully conscious and called for Mādhavā. I narrated to him all that happened, sobbing and crying.

Then Srī Palaniswami consoled me and looked at me with his yogic power. That yogic look caused a great movement in my spinal cord and created an unbearable pain. Srī Palaniswami saw me again with placid looks. My pain disappeared. He said, "My dear, Mādhavā does not have the fortune of seeing Srīvallabha with his physical body. For the last ten days his subtle body is in Kuruvapuram in the presence of Srīpāda. His desire is fulfilled irrespective of what had happened. The sportive plays of Srīvallabha are unimaginable. No one can comprehend the mysteries of time, fate and causes. That is possible only for Srīpāda. Srīpāda has entrusted me the responsibility of introducing life of Mādhavā into his gross body. We must perform that task immediately."

All the grief which gripped me until now disappeared in a moment. What more did I want than Mādhavā regaining his life? We came to the place where Mādhavā was buried. The corpse was exhumed. I was assisted by two other persons. Srī Palaniswami asked us to move towards

1 Wee hours i.e. early hours of the day between 3:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m.

the group of palmyra trees on the southern side and cry aloud, "Oh king cobra that had bitten Mādhavā! It is ordered that you should come to the presence of Srī Palaniswami. This is the command of Srīpāda Srīvallabha." We followed the instructions of Srī Palaniswami carefully.

Srī Palaniswami took four tiny sea shells from his loincloth. They were placed on four sides of the corpse. After some time, they rose from the ground to some height. Afterwards, they flew into the sky speedily in four directions making a fluttering sound. Later, we saw a hissing cobra crawling on the ground. That snake was very restless. The four sea shells of Srī Palaniswami were fixed as if glued on its hood. Srī Palaniswami asked the snake to remove the poison from the body of Mādhavā. The snake sucked out the poison from the point in the body where it had bitten Mādhavā. Chanting the name of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, Srī Palaniswami sprinkled water charged with the mantra on the snake. The snake kissed at the feet of Srī Palaniswami, circumambulated thrice and retreated peacefully.

The good results earned by offering food to devotees of Datta

Srī Palaniswami said, "This serpent was a female in a previous life. She became old. She had some sin and also some virtue. Once, she offered some food to a Brahmin who was a devotee of Datta. It is the nature of Datta to be pleased easily. The lady went to Yama Loka[1] after her death. Yama Dharma Raja[2] asked her, 'You have earned some sin[3] and some merit[4]. As you offered food to a Brahmin who was a Datta devotee, you received very great benefit. At present, Srī Dattatreya lives in the human world in the form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. He ordered us to make changes in your account of your merit and sin so that you gain great merit and take less sin. So Chitragupta[5] made changes in your account. Do you want to experience the results of sin at first or enjoy the happiness of merit?' For this she replied that she would like to undergo at first the suffering on account of the small

1 The world of the Lord of Death
2 The Lord of Death, of Justice and of the Law
3 Here: Papa
4 Here: Punya
5 Assistant of the Lord of Death, who keeps the records of deeds

amount of sins and that she would enjoy the life resulting from merit later. Therefore, she took birth as a snake on this earth. As she had a mentality of harming others, she was biting all those who crossed her way. So, she was accumulating more sin. My dear, there are four classes of snakes. The first type of snakes will not harm anyone but simply take air as food and live like yogis. The second type of snakes will kill those whose shadow falls on them. They become angry when the shadow of anyone falls on them. The third class of serpents will try to keep away from the view of humans. They run away with fear if any person comes face to face with them. The fourth class of snakes will take a revengeful attitude against anyone and bite him even though no harm is caused to them by the person concerned.

"That lady was filled with rajas[1]. So it bit Mādhavā who came nearby. She had bitten him because of the merit earned in the previous birth. Mādhavā lost his life because of sin earned in his previous life. By the grace of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, that old woman was liberated from her serpent life and attained a higher world. As an embryo, the jīva[2] lies in the form of a serpent in the fetus stage. On account of nāga dosha[3], mortality of children takes place."[4]

Donating food to a yogi

Srī Palaniswami said, "Srī Datta will be delighted for very modest services. If food is provided in the name of Datta to a worthy person, the donor derives immense benefit. A portion of the food essence transforms into mind.

1 Rajo guna, the quality of over-activity
2 The individual self or the soul
3 An affliction caused due to the wrong done to a serpent
4 *Editor's note:* For an incarnating soul, the semen of the man is the means and the ovum is the residence. The incarnating soul enters into the brain of a man as a fiery element and later enters into the semen, travels downwards during an act of sex and enters into the ovum, resulting in pregnancy. The tissue of the semen is in the form of a serpent in its micro form. Indulging into a lustful act of sex in an illicit manner is regarded in the Vedic wisdom as killing a serpent. Each time the sexual act is performed with lust and in an unlawful manner, he keeps killing serpents. The consequence of a constant burning away of serpents is the curse of being barren. The man loses the ability to give birth to a child; the woman loses her ability to get impregnated with a soul. This is seen as the negative effect of nāga dosha.

Mind, intellect, will, ego and body of the donor of the food get filled with auspicious vibrations. By that, he will be endowed with the power to attract all objects in the creation. Bountiful plenitude of materials comes from the grace of Goddess Mahalakshmi[1]. The whole Creation is governed by subtle vibrations and fine regulation", Srī Palaniswami explained.

The greatness of Srīpāda

Chanting the name of Srīpāda brings wealth and prosperity as blessings of Srī Lakshmi. How can we describe the luck of those who obtain His grace? On account of the mercy of Srīpāda, Mādhavā remained intact even though he was buried in the ground ten days before. Now Srīpāda is granting him life force. How can one explain the grace, mercy and the divine miracle of Srīpāda?

Mādhavā was gaining consciousness. He asked for water for quenching his thirst. Srī Palaniswami cajoled him and made him drink ghī. That ghī was also one hundred years old. Mādhavā refused to drink ghī. Srī Palaniswami persuaded him by promising to give him water after he drank ghī. After Mādhavā drank the ghī completely, he was given fruit juice. After some time, water was given to him.

Description of Nāga Loka[2]

Mādhavā regained his life. Our joy knew no bounds. Mādhavā was telling thus, "I reached Kuruvapuram in the subtle form. Srīpāda Srīvallabha is very tall. He has large eyes. Compassion, mercy and love overflow from His eyes continuously towards all creatures. As I was in a subtle body, I was invisible to other devotees there who were in gross bodies. Srīvallabha ordered me to go to the middle of the island in Kuruvapuram. Chanting the name of Srīvallabha, I went into the depths from the middle of the island. I noticed that many fortified structures existed in the depths of the

1 Lakshmi, Goddess of wealth, love and fortune
2 The lowest of the seven Indian netherworlds

earth at its center point. I learnt that it was Pātāla Loka[1]. For those in gross bodies, only gross material forms will be visible. For those like me who go there in the subtle form, the subtle world is visible there. The inhabitants there belong to the Nāga race[2]. They have the power to take any form they like. They usually prefer to be in the serpent form only. I saw many great serpents there. Some serpents had thousands of hoods. Diamonds decorated their hoods. Light emitted from those diamonds. Some serpents remained in a posture of deep silence and appeared as if they were in a yogic trance. A wonder! There was a great serpent among them. It had thousands of hoods. On that serpent, Srīpāda Srīvallabha was resting like Srī Maha Vishnu. Some of the great snakes were reciting Vedic hymns. Srīpāda was listening to that melodious singing in a rapturous mood. The big serpent beside me was saying this:

The magnificent glory of Srī Dattatreya

"'In the ancient aeon, Lord Datta was born as a son of Atri and Anasuya on Anasuya Mountain in Chitrakoot of Nepal. He did not end His incarnation, but moved in a subtle form in the Nilagiri Mountain[3], SrīShaila Mountain[4], Sabaragiri hill[5] and Sahyadri[6]. Those who wear directions as robe, those who are sky-vested are famous as Digambaras[7]. Datta was absorbed in yoga in Sahyadri. He taught kriya yoga[8] to Gorakshanāth[9] who was a follower of the Nātha tradition[10]. He appeared to a yogi named

1 The netherworld
2 Beings in the form of serpents
3 The Blue Mountains of South India
4 Srisailam in Andhra Pradesh
5 Sabarimala, the 'Hill of Sabari' in the Western Ghats; birthplace of Lord Ayyappa
6 A mountain range in the Western Ghats, where there are many centres of pilgrimage
7 Naked monks which wear no clothes
8 An ancient yoga technique
9 Also called Gorakshaka; lifetime unknown; 7th or 11th - 12th century; Mahayogi; incarnation of the Nava Nādha Hari; disciple of Matschyendranath; worshipped esp. in the north of India; the city of Gorakhpur, north of Varanasi, is named after him
10 A tradition of siddhas having great powers

Jnaneswar[1] in a formless yogic form seated in Kechari Mudra[2]. He surpasses time and place. For us who are in the presence of the Lord, past, future and present time elements do not appear differently. Everything is an eternal present time for us.'

Viewing Dattatreya along with Anaghā Devi

"Another great serpent by my side said, 'My boy Madhavā, we are kāla nāgas[3] and we are called rishīswaras[4]. Srī Datta wanted to conceal Himself after ruling [over the universe] for many thousands of years. He went under water in a river and remained immersed in water for many years. Then He came to the surface. We, as His followers, remained there with the hope that He would return with us. We knew that He was trying to conceal Himself from us. He again dived into the water and came out after many years. However, this time He had a goblet of wine in His hand. In another hand He held a beautiful damsel of sixteen years. We went away regretting that we misunderstood Him as God and He seemed to be a drunkard and womanizer. He disappeared. After He disappeared our eyes got opened. It occurred to us that the goblet of wine in His hand was ambrosia of yogic ecstasy and the beautiful damsel was Anagha Lakshmi Devi who combined in Herself the triumvirate of Lakshmi, Parvati and Saraswati. We undertook a rigorous penance for His reincarnation on this earth. Srī Datta was compassionate and took the incarnation of Srīpāda Srīvallabha in Pīthikapuram.

Description of Srī Kuruvapuram

"'The place where He went into the water for bath is now the sacred Kuruvapuram. Just as He was in watery samādhi, we were also in a state of yogic samādhi with finer pulsations in this subtle world. Kuru was the

1 Also called Dnyandeo or Dnyaneshwar (1275 - 1296); great yogi living in Maharashtra; conscious samadhi
2 A yoga practice, where the tongue is placed as far back as possible in the mouth to the uvula to awaken spiritual energies in the body
3 A special class of sacred serpents; Kāla: time
4 Great hermits

ancestor of Kauravas and Pāndavas. It was at this holy place that King Kuru was imparted divine knowledge. My dear Mādhavā, even Ādi Sesha[1] cannot describe the greatness of Kuruvapuram.'

The previous history of Sadasiva Brahmendra Swamī

"I paid obeisance to the holy feet of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. Merciful Srīvallabha spoke thus: 'My son, this divine form of My dārshan is very rare and a great fortunate thing. One of the serpents that spoke with you will take birth as Jyoti Ramalingaswamī[2] in the ensuing centuries. It will disappear also in the shape of radiant light. The other serpent that spoke to you will be born on the earth in the centuries to follow with the name of Sada Siva Brahmendra[3] and demonstrate many miracles. *Pīthikapuram is very dear to me. My pādukas[4] will be installed in Pīthikapuram. My pādukas are going to be installed in the house of My maternal grandfather where I was born. The acts of My birth are divine and mysterious.* They are to be kept as carefully guarded secrets. You visit the place in Pīthikapuram where My pādukas will be installed and from there proceed to Pātāla Loka. There you meet the kāla nāgas which undertook rigorous penance. You come back after that.'"

With smiles, Srī Palaniswami said, "My son Madhavā, let us talk about the kāla nāgas of Pithapuram afterwards. We must immediately take bath and carry on meditation. This is the order of Srīpāda Srīvallabha."

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

1 The king of all serpents
2 Siddha; also called Vallalar and Arutprakasa Vallalar Chidambaram Ramalingam (5th October, 1823 — disappeared on 30th January, 1874); one of the famous Tamil saints and also one of the greatest Tamil poets of the 19th century
3 Great saint, composer of Carnatic music and Advaita philosopher who lived near Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu in the 17th to 18th century
4 Sandals worshipped as holy

Chapter 4

Vision of Vāsavāmbika in Kuruvapuram

We three wanted to do meditation in accordance with the instructions of Srī Palaniswami. Srī Palaniswami said, "My dear Madhavā, my dear Shankarā, let all the three of us meditate. We can then discuss about our spiritual experiences felt during meditation. As this is the order of Srīvallabha, we will definitely have the experience of some spiritual turning point in the future. In the future, the Christian calendar will be in use. According to the Christian calendar, today, Friday, May 25, 1336 is a completely propitious day with high yogic powers. This day will be of special significance in our lives. I will leave my physical body here and go to Kuruvapuram in my subtle body. It is a child's play for me to roam in four or five places at the same time in my subtle form. We will all remain in the meditation of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. When His permission is granted, I will reach Kuruvapuram in my subtle body.

The way for accessibility of Swamī's grace

On hearing the words of Palaniswami I wondered and said, "Swamī, Mādhavā saw the divine auspicious form of Srīvallabha. You are always in communion with Srīvallabha in subtle planes, but I know only His name but not His form. How can I meditate upon Him?" Palaniswami smiled and said, "My boy, if you have devotion for Srīpāda, everything can be achieved. A tortoise protects its offspring with thought waves even if they are left at a very far away place. A cat carries its kitten from one house to another keeping them in its mouth. It will keep them in a place that it considered safe. In the same way at first, He will rule His devotees with the tortoise-offspring justice. After some progress, He will rule them with cat-offspring justice. Later, they will be ruled with monkey-offspring justice initially. Here, there is the necessity of the offspring to hold onto its mother with effort. After some more advancement, the devotees behave like the small fish which roam freely behind their mother wherever it goes. When you sit for meditation, He will

give dārshan to you. Srīvallabha wanted to take an important decision for the future. So, He wanted me to go over to Kuruvapuram in my subtle body on this momentous day. As soon as I receive His orders during meditation, I will at once proceed to Kuruvapuram. Some important incident is going to take place there. Lord Srī Datta has granted me the unique opportunity of witnessing that event completely with my eyes." Saying so, he went into meditation. Mādhavā and myself also took to meditation soon after.

Meditation went on like this for ten ghadiyas[1]. All of us became our normal selves curiously at the same time. After meditation, Srī Palaniswami was in very high spirits. Mādhavā and I requested Srī Palaniswami to narrate his experience during meditation. He narrated it with all smiles in the following manner:

The story of Shiva Sarma. The result from contemplation of Srīpāda Srīvallabha

"How fortunate are the people living in this Kali Yuga![2] Kuruvapuram is a small village. A Vedic scholar and pious Brahmin named Shiva Sarma, who recognised the greatness of Srīpāda, was living there along with his wife Ambika. Theirs was the only Brahmin family in Kuruvapuram. Daily he used to cross the river and earn money through acts appropriate for Brahmins to eke out a living. After making some money, he used to return to Kuruvapuram. He belonged to the lineage of Sage Kasyapa. Shiva Sarma was a great scholar, a strict adherent of religious practices and belonged to the Yajurveda[3] sect. All his earlier children died within a very short time after birth. At last, one son survived. Unfortunately, he was a dullard and a blockhead. Shiva Sarma became weak and sick as a skeleton due to the distress caused by the useless child. One day he recited Veda in the presence of Srīvallabha and afterwards stood silent. Srī Srīpāda noticed the sorrow in his mind and with a gentle smile said, 'Shiva Sarmā! *I am a slave to those who forget all worries and constantly meditate upon Me*. Tell Me about your desire.' For that Shiva

1 An Indian unit of time equalling to 24 minutes; thus, the meditation went on for four hours.
2 Dark age
3 One of the four Vedas, contains mantras for sacrifices

Sarma said, 'Swamī, I wished that my son should become a greater scholar and orator than me. All my aspirations became futile. My son became an incorrigible idiot. Being omnipotent, it is not difficult for You to make him a learned and useful person. I leave it to Your kind will.'

"Srīpāda averred, 'My dear, *nobody can escape the fruits of his past deeds. The entire Creation is moving subject to unbreakable laws. A woman gets her husband as the fruit of her worship. She gets children as the fruit of donations made by her. One should always donate to deserving people. Donations made to unworthy persons bring undesirable results. If food is offered to a good-natured person, the donor of food derives some part of the merit accruing from the good deeds performed by the good person. Donation should be made without arrogance. Then only it gives good results.* On account of the past karma[1], you got a dull witted one as your son. You couple wanted a child with a long span of life. You did not want a short-lived child. So, I granted you a son with a complete span of life. According to the rule of karma, to make him a suitable scholar by destroying his previous life's sins, you will have to sacrifice your life. If you are prepared to sacrifice your life, I will make your son a worthy scholar.' For that Shiva Sarma replied, 'Swamī, I entered old age. I am ready to sacrifice my life. What more can I wish than my son becomes a great scholar and speaker like Brihaspati[2].' Then the omnipotent Srīpāda declared, 'Yes, you will die soon. After death you will remain for some time in the subtle body and undertake penance in an underground cave at the foot of a neem tree[3] in Dhīsila[4] town. Afterwards, you will take birth in the holy land of Maratha[5]. Do not reveal this to your wife under any circumstances.'

Revealing the future birth of Srīpāda Srīvallabha

"Shiva Sarma died soon. Ambika along with her son were begging for food and were living a miserable life. There was no end to the taunts and re-

1 Acts and their effects from previous lives
2 The Lord of prayer and devotion; the guru of the gods
3 Tree native to India and Burma widely used as a medicinal plant
4 Dhīsila Nagaram: the later Shirdi
5 The Marathi-speaking region, mainly in the Indian state Maharashtra

marks of ridicule by the neighbours. That Brahmin youth could not bear the derisive remarks of the people. He ran towards the river to commit suicide. His helpless mother also wanted to end her life and she also ran after him. As a fruit of their previous births' merit, Srīpāda saw them on the way. He dissuaded them from their suicide attempt. With His boundless compassion He converted the foolish boy to an erudite scholar by His mere will. He instructed Ambika to spend the rest of her life worshipping Shiva. He expatiated at length the result obtained from worshipping Shiva at the time of sunset on Saturdays. He granted her a boon that in her next birth she would be blessed with a son who is equal to Him in all respects. However, as there was no one equal to Him in all the three worlds, He Himself resolved to be born as her son in her ensuing birth.

"My dear, Srī Charan's incredible līla[1] took place in my presence today i.e., Friday, May 25, 1336.

Vasavī's manifestation and her story

"Fortuitously, I took a bath in the Krishna River along with Lord Srīpāda. After the bath, Srīpāda created yogagni[2] with His atma shakthi. In that yogagni, Kanyakamba manifested with a wonderful agni-like complexion. For many days I tried to have dārshan of Vasavī Kanyakamba, the sister of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. But for some unknown reason, she was not giving me dārshan. I prostrated myself at the feet of Ambika. A smiling Srīvallabha was looking very pleased. The mother Srī Vasavī resembled exactly Srīvallabha. Anyone who sees them will think that they both are twins.

"In that great Kuravapuram kshetra[3], no one else except Srīpāda, Mother Vasavī and I were there. Srīvallabha's yoga līlas are endless. I was wondering in my mind where the town of Dhīsila was and how it was possible for the dead Shiva Sharma to do penance with only a subtle body. Srīvallabha said, 'There is no limit for yoga shakti. The yogic paths of Lord Datta are very strange, ever new, unheard of before and unthinkable.'

1 Sportive play
2 Yogic fire
3 Sacred place

"After some time, a couple manifested with divine glow from that yogagni. Srīvallabha told me that they were the father and mother of Mother Srī Vasavī, named Kusuma Sresthi and Kūsumbi. Mother Srī Vasavī was in meditation posture for some time. From the yogic fire generated by Srīpāda Srīvallabha, Srī Nagareswara Swamī manifested. After that, the brother of Srī Vasavī, Virūpaksha, and the gomathas[1] belonging to 102 gotras[2] who did agni pravesham[3], emerged from yogagni. Srīvallabha said pleasingly, 'Virūpaksha was born with the amsa[4] of Nandiswar[5] and I put My amsa also in him.

"'My maternal grandfather Srī Bapannavadhanulu, who invoked the power from Surya Mandalam[6] into the Srisaila Mallikarjuna lingam, lived in his previous birth in Brihat Sila Nagaram with the name of Bhaskara[7] and was the preceptor to the king. He was born with the amsa of Brahma. On the full moon day in the month of Sravana[8], I will definitely come to Brihat Sila Nagaram. My sister Srī Vasavī Kanyakamba will tie rakhī[9] to my hand. My dear Palanī! My deeds, plays and great events cannot be done by anybody. Nobody can imitate them. Nobody can get My power. As the fruit of your intense penance, you could have the dārshan of Siddha Vaishyas[10], Mother Vasavī and our parents Kusuma Sresthi and Kūsumbi. Now this Kuruvapuram is going to become a big palace, look!'

1 Normally, the cow as a mother symbol; here, the 102 Ārya Vaishya women who sacrificed themselves by immolation in fire rather than being captured by the king
2 Lineages
3 Self-sacrif Victory unto ice by burning oneself to uphold an ideal or dharma, the divine Law
4 Part, a part of God that has descended and taken to form; an avatar is a complete descent
5 Nandi, the bull, the vehicle of Shiva, his guardian and servant; Nandiswar: Nandi and Ishvara together as a unit
6 Srī Bapannavadhanulu was a reputed man of science and religion who had earlier channelled the energy of the Sun and a group of other stars (Surya Mandala) with a special ritual into a Shiva linga at Srisailam called Srī Saila Mallikarjuna lingam making it a powerful deity in that area.
7 The spiritual guru of the Ārya Vaishya community in the Brihat Sila Kingdom
8 5th month of the Indian year, beginning at the end of July and ending in the 3rd week of August
9 Friendship thread
10 Persons of the Arya Vaishya community who have attained the sublime state of a holy person with super-natural powers (siddhis)

"Wonderful! Surprising! A great king's palace was created by mere will. We were all seated in simhasanas[1] studded with diamonds.

"Srī Charana said, 'Gomathas belong to 714 gotras. The couples who entered agni along with Ambika belonged to only 102 gotras. During the times of Swarochisha Manu[2], there were eighteen towns devoted to Lord Ishvara, the most important one being Brihat Sila Nagaram. If anyone of you who are devotees of Datta, has dārshan of Ambika, Nagareswar[3] and other gods in Brihat Sila Nagaram, you will get special merit. Wherever Datta's name is chanted, Mother Vasavī will live there incognito. She will fulfill the desires. Wherever Vasavī Kanyakamba's name is remembered, there Datta will live incognito. With small effort great merit is granted. In Krita Yuga[4], people were following the truth and were siddhas. In Treta Yuga[5] sacrifices like yagnas and yagas were in vogue. In Dwāpara Yuga[6], mantra shastra[7] was prevalent. In this Kali Yuga, tantra shastra[8] is given special importance. Tantra means spreading the chaitanyam[9]. The root cause of this entire Creation is Myself. All the thirty-three crores[10] of gods, all the living beings, and endless millions of worlds are within Me and because of Myself they become dynamic and because of My presence will have different kinds of powers. The ultimate refuge of all the rivers is the ocean. Whichever god is worshipped, the worship reaches Me. If I am worshipped, one will get the fruit of worshipping all gods. The worlds that manifest coming out of My Parabrahma tatwam[11] are My images only. The thing coming out of My Parabrahma tatwam as the universe is My image only. There is no difference between Me and My image. The thing in the form of Adi Parashakti[12] is Myself only. The

1 A royal throne
2 The second of the Manus, the head of the second aeon (manvantara)
3 Name of Shiva
4 The first of the four ages, the Golden Age
5 The second of the four yugas
6 The third of the four ages
7 Science of sound and the use of mantras
8 Practices for experiencing the concrete manifestation of divine energy through rituals
9 Dynamism; consciousness; the energy called 'Kundalini' in the body is chaitanyam outside
10 Indian number; a crore corresponds to ten millions
11 Highest divine essence
12 Highest original power; also Paratatwam

Paratatwam is beyond the male and female forms. When I am in the form of a man, I am called Datta. When I am in the form of a woman, I am called Adi Parashakti. That is why the Vedic scholars said, 'Srī Krishna Syamala Devi and Srī Ramo Lalithambika[1].' The rays emanating from My gross form will make the places where I move to be sacred. My subtle body will be pervading the whole earth. My causal body will be pervading millions and millions of universes. My maha causal body is in the form of sat-chit-ananda[2]. It remains in rest immersed in Brahmananda. In all these four states, My consciousness works simutaneously. No one can get Me through any type of japa[3] or tapa[4] or yogic practices or any other method. One can get Me only through My special grace. Even those sacred people who had merged in Me will have to take birth with gross bodies on different occasions according to My will and perform My tasks.

The nature of Parabrahma

"'Anagha Lakshmi[5], who is the combined form of three shaktis (Maha Kāli, Maha Lakshmi, and Maha Saraswati) is My Shakti form. She is in the left half of My body. And in the right half of My body, My Trimurti[6] form is there, which is the combined form of the three gunas[7]. All this Creation is present inside Me. Creation, protection, amalgamation, retreat and gracefulness, all keep happening relentlessly. Every particle is the solidified form of letters. All the letters have vibrations and they are all mantras. This form of sound, which has vibration, is the form of Maha Saraswati. The power solidified is the form of Maha Lakshmi. The power embedded in that is the form of Maha Kāli. If I am Shakti[8] now, I will be the Shakta[9] the next moment.

1 The united form of God in male-female form
2 Being, consciousness, bliss
3 Repetition of the name of God
4 Penance
5 The trinity of Lakshmi, Parvati (Kāli) and Saraswati
6 Three divine forms in one
7 Qualities
8 Power
9 The bearer of Shakti

Jaganmatha[1] is the symbol of endless compassion and Jagatpita[2] is the symbol of strict divine justice. My fatherly form decides and strictly implements the inevitable consequences of karmas. My motherly form will show compassion and pity on devotees who have surrendered to Me. Even if the child does a great mistake, the mother takes it as a small one. Even if a small good deed is done, the mother will give great fruit in return. Learn that I am the father, mother and guru for all this Creation.

"'I decided to remove the doubt lingering in your mind. You have a doubt on how Vasavī has become My sister. Previously when I was born to Atri and Anasuya, while Anasuya was swinging Me in the swing, she thought, 'All are male children only. Not even one girl child was born with the cute features of Datta.' As she was a great pati vrata[3] and her desire was very intense, it materialized immediately. When the swing moved to one side, the form of Datta was seen and when the swing returned, the form of Vasavī was seen by her.

"'While she was wondering whether it was a dream or Vaishnava māya[4], Atri Maharshi came and said, 'Anasuya, after doing hard penance[5] to know the real form which was the source of Trimurtis[6] with the three qualities, we could have Datta as our child. I realized that this was the guru form which was the source of the Trimurthis. This indeed is the form of Lord Narayana. When the same form takes the female form, it becomes Kanyaka, which is nothing but Adi Parashakti[7]. They both had been brother and sister from the beginning of Creation. Oh, what a wonder!'

"'Then he was immersed in meditation and saw My form as the concentrated consciousness. He also saw that this was the form of Ambika also. He also understood that it was decided by Me that before manifesting as Srīpāda Srīvallabha, I should come as yoga māya and take the form of Vasavī Kanyaka. On the request of Atri and Anasuya, our forms got separated and Ambika tied rakhī[8] to Me. The form which was born as Datta to

1 Mother of the World
2 Father of the World
3 A virtous wife who follows her husband by mind, word and deed
4 An illusion/magic created by Vishnu
5 Tapas, fiery aspiration
6 Forms, related to the three forms of God — Shiva, Vishnu, and Brahma
7 Highest original divine form
8 Friendship thread

Atri and Anasuya is the same Srīpāda Srīvallabha in Kali Yuga. This form, existing before the manifestation of all the other forms of Datta, will be hidden. The form of Adi Parashakti existing before all her other manifestations is the same as the Vasavī Kanyakamba form. So that form also is hidden in Agnitatwam[1]. The dharma[2] of man and the dharma of God are different. To see this auspicious form of Ambika, one should earn great merit.

"'There is a reason to call all of you here today. My form, being endless Supreme Consciousness, is not bound in any form or name. I decided to stay in a still form like the limitless dynamic ocean without waves. There is no difference to me whether I am in a form or I am formless. So, I decided to hide this form starting today. Vasavī, let Me know Your wish and opinion.'

"I felt unhappy to see Srīpāda's form being hidden so early. Mother Vasavī in the divine auspicious form looked at Srīvallabha with praying looks and said, 'My most revered brother, as there is no difference to You in being formless or having a dynamic vibrant form, please remain in this Srīpāda Srīvallabha form for some more time and then you can hide it. Have mercy on real aspirants[3] so that they will be able to see this divine auspicious form. Keep this form hidden from the gross without having any difference between places and times. If You want to take avatar again, You can take a new form and body. In that case, if You wish, You can show grace on Your devotees from samadhi when that body rests in samadhi.'

For that Srīpāda replied like this:

The decision for the birth of Narasimha Saraswati

"'Oh Vasavī-Ambika, the embodiment of all auspicious qualities, may Your wish be fulfilled. I will remain in this body of Srīpāda Srīvallabha for fourteen more years till I attain thirty years of age. Afterwards, I will disappear. To revive the sanyasa dharma[4] once again, I will take birth as

1 Essence of fire
2 Divine law, purpose
3 Here: Sadhakas
4 Asceticism

Narasimha Saraswati[1] and remain in that incarnation for eighty years. Afterwards, I will stay in intense penance for three hundred years in Kadali Vana[2] and conclude My incarnation in Prajnapura[3] under the name Swamī Samartha[4]. In the form of avadhūtas[5] and siddhas, I will perform miracles and incredible sportive plays, with My limitless divine virtues and make the people follow the righteous path', Srīpāda spoke sweetly.

Swami showers grace on a foreigner and names him

"After remaining in meditation for some moments, He called Virupāksha and said, 'My dear Virupāksha, a white man from Germany reached Kurungadda overcoming many difficulties for My dārshan. This golden divine palace cannot be seen by others. So, he is searching for Me. Go and bring him here.' I wondered how a white man could come to this place which is difficult to get to. Virupāksha brought that white man. He became extremely happy with the dārshan of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. He held Srī Charana's feet and cried heavily. Srīpāda lifted him up. The nectar of grace was showering from His eyes. Srī Charana's form has limitless power and limitless love. His heart has the love of millions of mothers. Srīvallabha addressed him as John. He looked into John's eyes with piercing looks. It appeared that He was giving him initiation through the eyes. After some time, He touched John's forehead between the eyebrows. With that sacred touch, John experienced a divine ecstatic pleasure. Then Swamī told all those present there to look into the sky. One big number appeared in the sky with a divine glow and in Devanagari[6] type. He said that it was the jnana[7] number of Srī Chitragupta. Srī Charana said

1 1378 - 1459, second avatar of Lord Dattatreya in Kali Yuga
2 Literally: forest of plantain trees; a cave located in the interior of a dense forest called Nallamala at the foot of the hill of Srisailam, Andhra Pradesh; place where Lord Dattatreya did penance for 300 years
3 City of Akkalkot in Maharashtra; place where Lord Dattatreya incarnated as Akkalkot Maharaj / Swamī Samartha
4 Also known as Akkalkot Swamī Maharaj, left his body in 1878
5 Person liberated from karmic bondages, beyond ego-consciousness and duality
6 A commonly used script for writing Sanskrit and other languages
7 Wisdom, knowledge

that the number would become most important in the future centuries. The number is 170141183460469231731687303715884105727[1].

"Srīpāda said 'This is the number of the universe. The meaning and the inner meaning of this number will be understood by people who try to understand the nature of matter[2] according to the levels of their intellectual state.'

"Srīpāda was talking in Telugu, but John understood it. John was questioning in German language, Srīpāda was answering him in Telugu. What a wonderful thing! In the vicinity of Srīpāda, every moment was filled with His plays and miracles[3].

"All the knowledge and scholarship are at the feet of Srī Charana. Srī Charana said, 'When I was speaking in Trilinga language[4], John understood it in German language. Each word I spoke was being translated into German and John was able to hear. There is nothing which I cannot do for the sake of My devotees. There is nothing which I cannot lift and there is no problem which I cannot solve for them. People who believe Me by mind, action and speech, leaving all other dharmas behind are really blessed people. *When My grace is flowing on you, all the other shaktis in this nature give positive auspicious vibrations. You can take it as My promise*. There is nothing which I cannot get in all these fourteen bhuvanas[5]. Even if you are following your own righteous path, if you remember My name, I will protect you like the eyelid protects the eye. I am the embodiment of love. You will know Me through love only.

1 This number is a double Mersenne number of (2^{127})-1; it was proven by E. Lukas in 1876 and noted as a fourfold Mersenne number or the Catalan element 4 by E. Catalan.
2 Matter is called Padartha here
3 Here: 'Līlas' and 'Mahimas'
4 Telugu
5 Worlds

"'The star Dhruva[1] is important for the constellation of the Seven Rishis[2]. Learn how Dhruva got Dhruva padam[3]. He did penance[4] for Lord Narayana with a wish to sit in his father's lap. After having dārshan of Lord Narayana, he lost the desire to sit in the lap of his mortal father. Lord Narayana gave him the place of Dhruva padam. He also allowed Dhruva to sit in His lap. The Lord of the universe[5] graced Dhruva by allowing Dhruva to sit in His lap when the child actually desired deeply to sit in his mortal father's lap.[6]

In Kali Yuga, Dhruva is Lord Jesus

"'In Kali Yuga[7], Dhruva took birth as Lord Jesus[8]. He believed that God was his father. I will grace you in the same thought in which you worship Me. Srī Vasavī Kanyakamba gave Her power to Maria, the sacred soul[9]. Dhruva was born as Lord Jesus to Maria even when she was a virgin. Jesus Christ was not born by the physical union of father and mother. Know that Jesus Christ repeatedly called Sriman Narayana as his father. Sriman Narayana is none other than Srīpāda Srīvallabha, who is present in front of you. Oh, Siddha Vaishya munis[10], chant the Vedas in the presence of My

1 *Editor's Note:* In the Eastern wisdom teachings, Dhruva is described as a devotee of Lord Vishnu, who became the Polar Star because of the intensity of his spiritual aspiration. Dhruva is the principle of the Polar Star and the polar axis from north to south through the space globe. Seen from this point, Dhruva is posited higher than the Great Bear — the Seven Rishis — or other constellations and thus he is 'sitting in the lap of his father'. The story of Dhruva is describing the consolidation of the axis at a time in cosmo-genesis when the earth was still in mental form and had not yet solidified to a material form. Dhruva taking birth as Lord Jesus, as described here, has a symbolic meaning hinting at Jesus' great determination and focus towards the divine as his father.

2 Seven sages who are manifested in the universe as the seven stars of the Great Bear

3 Unchanging position

4 Tapas, fiery aspiration

5 Here: Jagad Prabhu

6 This is related to a story in Vishnu Purana

7 Dark age

8 Here: Yesu Prabhu

9 Pavitra Atma

10 Hermits maintaining silence

sister Vasavambika. With the sound of your sacred chanting of Vedas, the result of bad deeds of people in the coming centuries can be destroyed. Srī Nagareswara and Vasavī Ambika like the chanting of Vedas very much. The white man, who is in our presence by chance, will be born in the next birth in the house of good Brahmins who are Veda scholars in the Himalayan region. He will become a yogi and will reach Shamballa village. You drive away the evil powers present in the polluted air with the sound of sacred Vedas.' Thus, Srīpāda told them.

"Siddha Vaishya munis' Veda ghosha[1] was completed. Srī Vasavī Kanyakambika, Srī Nagareswara, Virupāksha, the Kusuma Sresthi couple and Siddha Vaishya munis entered the agni and disappeared. Srīpāda Vallabha blessed John. John said, 'It is good to have a book on Sri Charana's life history.' Swamī replied, 'In the coming centuries in accordance with your wish, Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam will come in German language also.' He assured John and sent him. He ordered me to enter the gross body again. Saying so, He went to take a bath in the confluence of waters at Prayag[2]. He disappeared.

"My dear, today i.e., Friday, May 25, 1336, is a sacred day. Shankar, tell me the experience you had in meditation."

The speciality of Shirdi Sai Baba's manifestation

I said, "Oh, most respected Srī Palaniswami, when I was meditating I saw a monk[3] in the attire of a Muslim. He was often uttering the sound 'Allah Malik.' He was sitting under a neem tree. He must have been 16 years old. He told an old person who came for his dārshan that, 'I am a Nanak Pandhī Mussulman'. To a different person, he said, 'I am a good Brahmin born in the Bharadwaja lineage[4].' He told another person, 'This is my gurusthan[5] and people who worship here on Thursdays and Fridays will get good luck.' Srī Palaniswami, throughout my meditation, I had the dārshan

1 Chanting of Vedic mantras
2 Today the city of Allahabad; confluence of the Ganges, Yamuna and the mystic Saraswati Rivers
3 Here: Sanyasi
4 Here: Gotra
5 Place of the Guru

of that young sanyasi only. I did not get the dārshan of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. Some people came and started digging at a place under the neem tree where that young sanyasi sat. There was a small cave inside. Inside that, four lamps were glowing intensely on the four sides. After some time, that young sanyasi came there, had the cave opening closed again and said, 'This is my gurusthan. Nobody should open it.' Srī Palaniswami, I did not understand the wish of Srīvallabha in granting me this type of dārshan in meditation."

The story of Yavanas[1]

Palaniswami said, "My dear disciples, the nature of Srīvallabha cannot be imagined. One cannot describe His plays[2]. His wish is to coordinate all the dharmas and traditions in the world and merge them in sanātana dharma[3]. He will establish the sanātana dharma in the whole universe at the end of Kali Yuga. Sri Charana told John, 'Yahova[4]' means 'I am'. That is the form of Parabrahman. All the consciousness reflecting in the universe is the consciousness of Jesus Christ who is popular as the son of God. The consciousness purified is the same as sacred flowing grace which gives peace and happiness. All those three forms are Mine. As a result of your pure love you could get My darshan, which is very difficult to get otherwise. Similarly, the Yavana dharma also is an inherent part of the essence of Datta[5]. A mahatma by the name of Maha Mathi[6] was a devotee of formless Makkheswar[7]. He used to call God as Allah. He saw all the seven heavens. He wanted to see Allah, but he saw only his reflec-

1 People of Indian origin but outside the Vedic system; they are described as bent on replacing the Vedic system of India with their own belief system
2 Here: Līlas
3 The eternal Law
4 Yahweh. *Editor's Note:* According to the Wisdom Teachings, Yahova is the male-female god representing the absolute God, Parabrahman. Out of this, the pure consciousness or Christ consciousness comes forth. Therefore, Jesus Christ is known as the Son of God.
5 Here: Datta tatwam
6 Muhammad (570 – 632 CE)
7 The Lord of Mecca

tion. The Yavana sanyasi[1] you saw was a Brahmin who was born in the lineage of Bharadwaja. He lost his parents during his childhood. He was brought up by a Muslim fakir and learnt Muslim dharmas. He learnt Hindu dharmas by staying with a Hindu mahatma. He learnt kriya yoga from a great yogi in Varanasi[2]. He then met a Datta avadhūta[3] and asked for silver coins. As his tin would not get filled up, the avadhūta put two khajur[4] fruits in it. Then he was satisfied. With that, the chaitanyam of Datta flowed into him. Later, he came to Dhīsila Nagaram[5]. It was a small village in a forest area. When he got to the thick forest, Srīpāda Srīvallabha sat on a stone and meditated. If anyone does meditation sitting on that stone, he would get wonderful results. Srīpāda Srīvallabha did tapas for twelve years in the underground house you saw under the neem tree. During those twelve years, He got the power of tapas equivalent to that of doing tapas for 12,000 years. Srīvallabha's body got transformed into a 12,000 years old one. The whole cave was occupied by his hair[6]. His eyebrows also became thick. To see his eyes, one would have to lift the eyebrows with difficulty. Srī Charana gave that fruit of tapas to that young sanyasi. When that young monk was about four years old, Srī Charana started tapas in that cave in his hidden form. When that sanyasi became sixteen years old, He completed twelve years of tapas. My dear, these incidents which I am telling you are going to happen in the coming centuries. They are not the present incidents. Srīpāda will manifest with the name of Narasimha Saraswati and will be there for eighty years with that name and form. He will later be in deep meditation[7] incognito in Kadali Vanam for three hundred years. He will later take the name of Swamī Samartha in Prajnapura[8], and will later merge in the Mallikarjuna lingam in Srisailam. But the Yavana[9] sanyasi whom you saw will also be in an old

1 Shirdi Sai Baba (- 1918 CE)
2 Shyama Charan Lahiri (Lahiri Mahasaya, 1828 - 1895); a disciple of Mahāvatar Babaji and Guru of Sri Yukteswar, the Guru of Yogananda
3 Person liberated from karmic bondages, beyond ego-consciousness and duality
4 Dates
5 Today: Shirdi
6 Here: Jatajutam
7 Here: Taponishta
8 City of Akkalkot in Maharashtra
9 Here: Muslim

aged form. He (Srīpāda) will put His chaitanyam in the sanyasi and make him equal to Him.

"My dear Shankar, Srīpāda Vallabha did intense penance for twelve years in the middle of those four nanda dīpams[1]. He divided the whole universe into sixteen parts and illustrated the four parts of Brahman as follows. Symbolically, for the four parts of Brahman, He lighted those four nanda dīpams with His yogic fire[2], and he remained in penance. The sides east, west, south and north are the kalās[3] of the first part. People who worship them will get divine glow. The kalās in the second part are earth, space, sky and ocean. Those who worship them will become endless[4] and conquer the worlds. The kalās in the third part of Brahman are fire, sun, moon and electricity. Those who worship them will become lustrous and conquer worlds. The kalās in the fourth part are life, eye, ear and mind. Those who worship them will become established in them. Moreover, one gets knowledge[5] if the north side is conquered. If the south is conquered, he will not have problems from bhūta[6], preta[7] and pisachams[8]. If the east is conquered, one gets wealth, and if the west is conquered, the king becomes favourable. If one conquers all the four sides, he will get digvijayam[9]. Srīpāda Vallabha has the sides as His clothes. He has spread to the endlessness of all the sides. So, He is called Digambara[10]. Srī Datta Digambara is the same as Srīpāda Srīvallabha Digambara. From the gross, subtle and causal bodies of Srī Charana, thousands of rays and kalās will be emanating. Some rays become as

1 Perpetual lights as earthenware lamps filled with oil and a cotton wick
2 Here: Yogagni
3 Divine manifestations with time
4 Here: Ananta
5 Here: Jnana
6 The spirit of a man who died a violent death either by accident, suicide, or capital punishment, and has not had a proper funeral ceremony
7 The spirit of a dead person before his funeral rites are performed; more commonly: the spirit of a deformed or a crippled person or of a child that dies prematurely, due to the omission of ceremonies during the formation of the embryo. A preta is not necessarily wicked or malicious towards people.
8 A demon created by a man's vices; the ghost of a liar, drunkard, adulterer, criminal, or of one who has died insane
9 Absolute victory
10 Wearing no clothes

amsa[1] avatars. After completing the tasks given to them, they will be merging into the original consciousness[2] of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. He would do creation, protection, annihilation, retrogression and graceful acts simultaneously. The vibrations seen in the creation of worlds are called srishti tatwam[3]. Their preservation and protection is called sthithi tatwam. Their annihilation is called laya tatwam[4]. The returning of those vibrations into their origin is called tirodhana[5]. The vibrations related to compassion and pity on the jīvas[6] are called anugraham[7].

"Men become weaklings with the passage of yugas[8]. Therefore, the Almighty descends to lower states based on the prayers of sages. The incarnation of the Lord in a human body is an indication of His complete grace. This descent of the Lord to lower levels enables humans to obtain excellent results with little effort. Therefore, human beings in Kali Yuga are fortunate. By mere remembrance, the grace of Lord Datta would be available. There are many opportunities for the downfall of man in Kali Yuga, but the number of opportunities for obtaining the grace of Srīpāda is twofold. This is a sacrosanct truth. Remembrance, adoration and other activities establish association with Lord Srīpāda. By these, all the sinful acts, impure sensual influences, and behavioural patterns of the devotees enter into the consciousness of Lord Srīpāda and auspicious vibrations enter into His devotees.

"Srī Charana[9] destroys those heaps of sins and black auras which entered into His consciousness by taking a single dip in a holy river or He will burn them into ashes in the blazing fire of His yoga. He will personally do penance and dedicate the fruits of that penance to His devotees. Thus, He protects the devotees without violating the principle of karma. If necessary, He commands the inert karmic nature and grants liberation for those who take refuge in His auspicious feet. He destroys karma for

1 Partial manifestations, a part of God that has descended and taken to form
2 Here: root chaitanyam
3 The wisdom of creation
4 The wisdom of dissolution after creation and preservation
5 Retrogression, reabsorption to the primary source
6 The individual self or the soul
7 Grace, graceful acts
8 Aeons
9 Someone with auspicious feet; name for Srīpāda

the welfare of His devotees every second, in a very ferocious form. Therefore, those who surrender to His feet[1] get freedom from the shackles of karma, even without being aware of it."

When Palaniswami explained facts in the above manner, I was bold to ask him a question regarding a doubt that had cropped up in my mind. "Swamī, I heard that when Saturn afflicts for seven and a half years, even Shankara[2] cannot escape from the trouble. Pray tell me how Srīguru Sārvabhūma[3] wards off afflictions from planets."

"My dear Shankarā, the planets in the zodiac do not have friendship or enmity towards living beings. When a person is born, the planetary positions form according to his past karma[4]. He derives good and evil effects according to the movement of the planets. When the subtle rays from the planets cause ill effects and mantra, tantra, yantra remedies cannot abate them, one has to resort to japa, tapa, and homa practices. When they also cannot alleviate the suffering, one has to take refuge in the pādukas of Srīguru. Srīpāda is omnipotent. Good and evil forces also exist. The vibrations of those good and evil forces cause good and bad developments respectively. Each planet has a dominance on a particular part of the human anatomy. When planetary afflictions take place, the relevant part of the human body ruled by the adverse planet becomes sick. Undesirable results follow when the subtle vibrations flowing from the universal consciousness are received. Variations take place in the attraction and repulsion caused by the vibrations. A person who is hitherto in good company suddenly will be subjected to ill effects like bad company, friendship with low class people, unreasonable quarrels, loss of relatives, disputes with family members, and reduction in the power of personal attraction. The universal forces create vibrations continuously. They work steadily in a state of sthiti[5] for some time in the concerned persons. After some time, they leave those persons and reach the bodies of persons who are destined to come under their influence. They begin to give results again according to the rotation of the wheel of time. People who are dev-

1 Here: Pādukas; designates sandals as well as foot-prints of divine beings
2 Shiva
3 The Emperor
4 The accumulated good and bad karma (papa and punya) from previous births
5 Rest, latency

otees of God and observe spiritual practices like japa and tapa can get some respite to some extent from the planet's rigour. Sages conduct various kinds of sacrifices for the universal welfare. They dedicate their spiritual power derived through tapas for the wellbeing of humanity. As a result of this practice, harmful influences arising in the universe revert back to their origin instead of harassing men. It means that they return to the centre of their origin. This can be termed as tirodhana[1]. Granting of abundant auspicious results even for small amount of good deeds is called grace[2]. My son, I explained to you the concepts of srushti[3], sthiti, laya, tirodhana and anugraha according to the doctrine of kriya yoga.

"In future, the powers of Srīpāda Srīvallabha will flow in a large measure in the Muslim fakir you saw in your meditation. You saw four nanda lamps in the underground cellar beneath the neem tree. This is an extraordinary matter. Srīpāda Srīvallabha granted you this experience with a great intention in mind. He only knows the inner purpose of it. His divine acts are indeed superb. They have a very deep purpose. Moreover, they may be divine secrets not to be divulged to others. I can only explain to you to the extent He permitted me. The entire Creation works under the guidance of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. He is the authority for Himself. The glorious, yogic powers of the Master of this universe are immeasurable and cannot be comprehended in terms of measurements, limits and quantities."

My mind immensely rejoiced at the explanation of Srī Palaniswami. From the time I started from the Udipi area[4] till I reached Kuruvapuram, many wonderful and strange things were taking place. I wanted to write a book about them and obtain the permission of the Srīguru Sārvabhūma[5]. I wanted to request Srīpāda in this regard after getting His dārshan.

Srī Palaniswami grasped the feelings in my mind easily and said, "I have understood the ideas in your mind. You want to write His history for the benefit of devotees of the future. Srīpāda Srīvallabha will surely bless your effort." Then Srī Palaniswami asked Mādhavā to speak about his meditation experiences.

1 Disappearance or retreat
2 Here: Anugraha
3 Creation
4 Here: Kshetra
5 The Emperor

Mādhavā said, "Mahatma, I saw in my meditation[1] a Brahmin sanyasi wearing a loincloth[2]. He used to worship Agni and the Sun. He was talking to a Veda pandit: 'I want to send this coconut you gave me to the Muslim fakir. That Muslim fakir is in a higher state than me. He is like an elder brother to me. He knows past, present and future[3]. I will take the treatise written on palm leaves named Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam present with you. I will give it to the Muslim fakir, whom I rever as my elder brother. I will take his blessings. Are the things narrated in this true or fictitious? I will decide on how much truth is in there and how much fiction is in there. After deciding about it, I will write a treatise analyzing them.'

"Then the Veda pandit said, 'Sir, you will not be able to take the coconut I gave you to that Muslim fakir. Your effort will definitely be a waste. The Charitāmrutam had already been written. It happened by the will of Srīvallabha. This treatise named Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam is held in high esteem as a sacred book by all gods, rishis and great people. This treatise was written on the command of Srīpāda. *No one has the freedom to change even one letter in this.* This is with us for many generations. Srīpāda's command is that the ruined copy of this must be immersed in the Ganges River. We have been protecting it from many generations. Without Srīpāda's command we do not reveal, even to a great person, the fact that a treatise like this exists. You seem to wish changing certain parts in this Charitāmrutam. We belong to the family who feel the touch of Srīpāda's feet when we put our hands on this treatise. If you are greater than Srīpāda, your order is binding on us. You are in the attire of a sanyasi. We are householders. We cannot dare to oppose you. If you can take this coconut to Dhīsila Nagaram, I will give this palmyra leaf copy to you, discard my holy thread[4] and declare myself as an untouchable[5]. You say that the Muslim fakir knew about the nanda dīpams. You also say that it is Dhīsila Nagaram only and that in due course, it acquires the name Shiladī Nagaram. An avadhūta in our family told me recently that he found a partial manifestation of Srī Dattatreya in Aurangabad[6] and that

1 Here: Dhyana
2 Here: Kaupinam
3 Here: Trikāla vedi
4 Here: Yajnopaveetam, the holy thread worn by Brahmins
5 Here: a Chandāla
6 City in Northern India

he took him to Dhīsila Nagaram. Even if you go to Pīthikapuram, you cannot install Srīpāda's pādukas there. Pīthikapuram is an anthill of people like quarrelling poisonous snakes. They spend time in vain arguments and counter-arguments and unnecessary disputes but have no spiritual aspirations. If you install Srīpāda's pādukas in the house of our ancestors, it will be a happy thing for us. But you should have to get the grace of Srīpāda completely. Without the will of Srīpāda, not even one leaf on a tree will move. Our family does not need the name and fame, titles or honours given by ordinary people. We believe that Srīpāda will be moving as a small boy incognito in our house.' Swamī, this is what I saw in meditation[1]."

Palaniswami said, "My dear children, that Veda pandit belongs to the descendents of Srīpāda's maternal uncle. In their families, they feel Srīpāda as an incognito small boy. If anyone belonging to any caste, any race, any religion, any country, in any age[2] feels Srīpāda as a divine child and has vatsalya bhakti[3], Srīvallabha will be living in their house as a boy incognito. This was revealed by Srīpāda Himself in Pīthikapuram. Sri Charana was born in His maternal grandfather's house in Pīthikapuram. The people in that family migrated to other villages some years after Srīvallabha left Pīthikapuram. His family members also similarly migrated to other places. Srīpāda transferred His power completely into the Muslim fakir of Dhīsila Nagaram[4] in later years. In Bengal, a great person by the name of Gadadhar[5] was born. He would worship Kālikāmba[6]. When he prayed for liberation, Jagad Janani[7] did not agree. She asked him to take birth again for the sake of his followers and to grace them considering their merits and sins. He did not agree to take birth again. Then Kālikāmba[8] asked the Muslim fakir of Dhīsila Nagaram to come to her with his subtle body. That Muslim fakir remained dead for three days. He told his

1 Here: Dhyana
2 Here: Yuga
3 A form of devotion perceiving God as a small child, like in the worship of the child Jesus
4 Today: Shirdi
5 Given name at birth of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa (1836 – 1886)
6 Mother Kali
7 The Divine Mother
8 Mother Kali (a form of the Divine Mother)

devotees, 'I will go to Allah and come back within three days.' Kālikāmba is none other than Vasavī Kanyaka Parameswari present in Brihat Sila Nagaram. This Muslim fakir was given the task of looking into the sins and merits of the followers of Gadadhar. Jagad Janani deposited part of Herself in him. Srīvallabha also deposited part of Himself in him. After three days when that Muslim fakir came back into his gross body, he became the most powerful one. He served the Masjid, in which he lived, as the mother. It was because of the amsa[1] of the Divine Mother entering into him. So, he showed motherly affection towards his devotees.

"My dear, all these things I am narrating will be happening in the coming centuries.

"The Veda pandit seen in meditation[2] had a Vaishya as his dear friend. That Vaishya prayed to the avadhūta who was wearing a loincloth[3], 'Swamī, please accept our hospitality; we are Ārya Vaishyas. Jagad Janani Vasavī Kanyakambika was born in our caste. You please take the food materials and cook yourself.' The Veda pandit also prayed for the yati[4] to accept the great Vaishya's invitation. But the yati, who was a Brahmin formalist, told him curtly that he would not accept the offered food materials as alms[5]. This incident angered Srīvallabha and Srī Vasavī Mata as well. They wanted to punish avadhūta in order to remove the pride of his Brahmin birth. The avadhūta reached Pīthikapuram. The Brahmin community of Pīthikapuram, who gave importance to customs and practice of external worship, grandly welcomed that avadhūta. Srīpāda Srīvallabha's maternal grandfather's house went into the hands of outsiders. After consulting the house owner, it was decided to install the Srī Pādukas in the place where Srīpāda was born in that house. Silver pādukas were installed in accordance with the scriptures[6]. During the midnight hours, a thief entered that house. The house owner was also awake. The thief entered the room where the pādukas were installed. The house owner told the thief, 'I have no belief at all that Srīpāda Srīvallabha was a great avatar[7]. I do not have any belief

1 Partial-manifestations, a part of God that has descended and taken to form
2 Here: Dhyana
3 Here: Kaupinam
4 Monk
5 Here: Bhiksha
6 Here: Shastras
7 Here: Avatar Purusha

in this avadhūta. You can take away these silver pādukas and give me half of the amount you get when you sell them.' The thief said, 'Alright'.

"On the next day, the pādukas were not seen. The avadhūta felt sorrow. Silver pādukas were installed a second time. Worship was done grandly. During the midnight hours, the avadhūta stayed in the same room near the pādukas. He was chanting sacred verses[1] on Datta. As he was looking, the pādukas rose into the air, hit hard on the head of the avadhūta and disappeared. The voice of Srī Charana was heard, 'I can make My body disappear. Can I not make these pādukas disappear? If the coconut had reached Dhīsila Nagaram, My maternal uncle would have to fulfil his hard oath. That is not agreeable to Me. The coconut you sent was eaten away on the way. So, there is no way you can be given the treatise 'Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam'. Who do you think I am? I don't care whether you are a yogi or bhogi[2]. I am a madiga[3]. My profession is to remove the skin and make chappals out of it. There is no sin even if I remove your skin and make chappals.' The voice roared. The avadhūta shivered. On the next day, a great commotion occurred. Those who greatly honoured him blamed him as a cheating sanyasi who stole the silver pādukas for want of money. They demanded him to explain how the silver pādukas disappeared when he himself was in the puja room. With the heaviness of insult, the yati left Pīthikapuram."

Palaniswami told us that this was going to happen in the future. He said, "My dears, there are many unbelievable līlas in the history of Srīpāda. If anybody doubts or criticizes His history, he will become a Brahma rakshasa[4]. Srīvallabha made the people of Pīthikapura doubt the sincerity of the avadhūta because the avadhūta doubted the authenticity of the Charitāmrutam. This was His līla."

Mādhavā asked, "Swami, shall I tell about the event of my visit to Pīthikapuram with my subtle body and the incidents that happened there?" Srī Palaniswami agreed. Mādhavā said, "I reached a house in

1 Here: Stotras
2 One who is indulging in the senses
3 Member of a caste mainly spread in South India; it is regarded as outside the four castes system of Hinduism, so clubbed in the 'untouchable' category; usually leather workers and cobblers by profession
4 The spirit of a deceased Brahmin, a scholar who has misused his knowledge or done bad deeds

Pīthikapuram with my subtle body. At one place I noticed that all my powers were being attracted by two divine pādukas staying incognito."

The pādukas at Srīpāda Srīvallabha's birthplace. The installation of the idols of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, Srī Dattatreya and Srī Narasimha Saraswati

Srī Palaniswami said, "Madhavā, the house which you visited is the house of the maternal grandfather of Srīpāda Srīvallabha and is the birthplace of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. It has attracted all your powers. In the Pātāla[1] below the pādukas[2], there are hermits doing penance from several hundreds of years. Srīpāda Srīvallabha pādukas will be installed only in the birthplace of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. After some years from the installation of the pious pādukas there, the 'Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam' comes to light effortlessly. In the place where you meditated, the idols of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, Srī Dattatreya, and His next incarnation, Srī Narasimha Saraswati, will be installed. Afterwards, many divine sportive plays will take place in that place[3]."

After that Srī Palaniswami became silent. He asked the corpse of the youth buried near our cave to be exhumed. He began to chant the pranava (Oum) after the body was taken out. Vyāghreswara Sarma came there with the loud roar of 'Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadyae.'[4] Srī Palaniswami entered into the body of the young man. Vyāghreswara Sarma who was in the body of a tiger took away the body of Srī Palaniswami which decayed with age to throw it into a nearby river.

Palaniswami, who entered the new body, ordered, "Leave this place immediately. My dear Mādhavā, go to your Vichitrapuram. You saw the pious people of Pīthikapuram in your subtle body. That is enough for you for this life. My dear Shankarā, go to the great place[5] Tirupati. Madhavā, may the grace of Srīpāda Srīvallabha be showered on you."

1 Nether world
2 Sandals worshipped as holy
3 Here: Kshetra
4 May Lord Srīpāda protect us
5 Here: Maha kshetra

Then Mādhavā went towards Vichitrapuram and I went towards Tirupati. Where is the end to the divine sportive plays of Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 5

Arrival at Tirupati and Encounter with Tirumala Das at Kanipakam

The removal of the harassment of Saturn by the mercy of Srīpāda

In my itinerary, I reached the great sacred place Tirupati[1]. I felt some inexplicable peace of mind. I took a bath in the temple lake[2] of Tirumala. I had dārshan of Srī Venkateswara[3] and went into meditation in the temple premises. In meditation, I saw Srī Venkateswara as a female. That form that appeared as Bala Tripura Sundari[4] changed into the form of Parameswara[5] within seconds. After some time, it changed to be the form of Maha Vishnu. After meditation for some more time, that form appeared like a handsome sixteen-year old yogi. The eyes of the child monk[6] were full of nectar. Affectionate love of a thousand mothers was emanating from His two eyes. In the meanwhile, a black, ugly person approached the young sage and said, "Lord Srīpāda Srīvallabhā, You are the Master of the universe. From today on, your devotee Shankar Bhatt will start a seven-and-a-half year Saturn period. I will put him to all possible troubles in this world. I am awaiting the orders of the Lord." The compassionate Lord said, "Sanīswarā[7], you are the cause for destiny. You make people experience the consequences of their deeds and release them from the bonds of karma. You carry on with your duty. As I have a vow to protect āsrita bhaktajana[8], you can see in which way I will protect and release Shankar Bhatt

1 A big temple city in Andhra Pradesh dedicated to Lord Venkateswara
2 Here: Pushkarini
3 A form of Lord Vishnu worshipped particularly in Tirupati
4 Beautiful Goddess beyond the three worlds; the Divine Mother
5 The highest God
6 Here: Yati
7 Saturn
8 All devotees/disciples who have taken refuge in God/Me

from the troubles you inflict on him." After this conversation of Srīpāda and Sanīswara, both disappeared from my meditation. It became difficult to meditate upon the idol of God afterwards. I understood that difficult times were ahead and that Srīpāda would rescue me from troubles. I came to Tirupati from Tirumala[1].

I was wandering in the streets of Tirupati. My mind was wavering. A barber forcibly stopped me and said, "Are you not Subbayya who absconded from the house twenty years ago? Your parents became worried. Your wife attained puberty and came of age. Therefore, come home, accept her and live happily with children." The barber thundered in his demanding speech. Then I explained, "Sir! I am a Brahmin from Karnataka named Shankar Bhatt. I am a traveller visiting holy places. I am a devotee of Datta. Having heard that Lord Datta incarnated as Srīpāda Srīvallabha, I am going to Kurungadda. I swear on the holy Gayatri that I am a bachelor. I am not at all the barber Subbayya as you think."

He was not listening to me. Many people gathered there. Everyone was blaming me in a different way. They took me to the house of Subbayya. The parents of Subbayya regarded me as their own son and requested me in a number of ways. They were telling me moral principles that I should not desert them and that it is a heinous crime to abandon a wife who attained maturity. One of them said, "Subbayya has become dirty with moustache and beard. If we shave him, his old glow will come back." They did not listen to me even though I was remonstrating. Forcibly, they shaved my head. My beard and moustache were removed. They also removed the sacred yagnopavīta[2] from my shoulders. They summoned a sorcerer known to them to treat me. That person wore strange costumes. His dreadful looks pierced my heart and caused intense pain. They bound my hand and foot and made wounds on my scalp with a sharp knife. They applied lemon juice and other juices to those wounds. I was suffering unbearable pain. They decided that a Brahmin devil possessed Subbayya after he left home and for that reason Subbayya wore a sacred thread and started chanting mantras. The Brahmin community in Tirupati also kept mum. They also thought that the traveller in the town was Subbayya and that a Brahmin ghost took possession of him. When I was taken to the Brahmin elders in the town, I

1 One of the most holy cities of India with a big temple of Lord Venkateswara
2 Sacred thread worn by men initiated into Gayatri (the 'twice-born', dwijas)

told them that I was from Karnataka, a Smartha Brahmin belonging to the lineage of Bharadwaja. I told them that I knew Namaka Chamaka mantras[1] and that I performed sandhyāvandana[2] daily. Those Brahmin elders did not believe me. They said that a Kannada[3] Brahmin devil caught me and that with correct treatment I should be made a normal person.

I fainted from the pain caused by the wounds. My lamentation became a cry in the wilderness. When I came back to my senses, I saw that an ugly person with a black aura resembling me sat opposite to me. Without speaking anything, he merged into me and became one with me. It occurred to me that due to the influence of Saturn, my fate turned topsy-turvy and that a seven-and-a-half year period would be an extraordinary difficult time for me. Only Srīpāda Srīvallabha could save me.

Even in that anguish, I was mentally chanting the name of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. As I was chanting the name of Srī Charan my pain was diminishing. The sorcerer sacrificed chickens and goats and was conducting strange and weird rituals. I was given a regulated diet. The sorcerer decided that vegetarian food should be served to me as a Brahmin devil possessed me. I was worried that meat also might forcibly be fed to me, but on account of the mercy of Srīpāda I was given vegetarian food. This brought some consolation to my mind. For three days I underwent a hellish agony. Even in that state, I did not stop remembering the name of Srīpāda. The pain abated on the fourth day. Queer experiments were conducted on my body. The witch doctor was also giving me whip lashes. I writhed with pain and cried, "Srīvallabhā! Saranu![4] Saranu!" How can hellish troubles torment devotees who serve Lord Datta with undivided devotion?

In the meantime, a miracle took place. I did not feel the least of pain even though the blows of the whip fell on my body. On the other hand, the witch doctor writhed with pain. He did not understand why he was getting the pain of the blows when he was whipping me. He was looking at me with queer looks. I noticed the divine play of Srīpāda and laughed. Even though I was eating a regulated diet, it was very delicious. I was eating

1 A popular hymn used for worshipping Lord Shiva
2 A daily ritual mandatory for orthodox Hindus; meaning salutation to the twilight, dawn and dusk
3 An Indian language mainly spoken in the state of Karnataka
4 Seeking shelter, refuge

meals to my heart's content. I was eating the food with the idea that it was the prasād[1] of Srīpāda. In spite of the fact that the sorcerer was eating chicken and goats liked by him, it was turning into poisonous food. His health was deteriorating. He stopped harassing me and spent his time merely with mantras and rituals. His house was burnt on the fifth day he commenced treatment to me. Even though no fire was ignited in the sorcerer's house on that day, a fire broke out suddenly in the presence of all and the house was reduced to ashes. On the sixth day, the sorcerer came to the house of Subbayya with a pale face. He said that a Brahmin ghost who was a witch took hold of Subbayya and that the devil burnt his house with witchcraft because he started treatment. Many rituals were to be conducted to win over many evil forces like Bhetala[2] and for that purpose a large amount of money was required. I knew that there was no use for the treatment and that the witchdoctor was making all suggestions due to his greed of money. It came to my mind that nothing would be more unfortunate and treacherous than to accept the wife of Subbayya as my own, thus succumbing to the course of cruel fate. I could not understand why fate was playing so mercilessly with me. I felt as if my heart was cut open with a hacksaw. I told the parents of Subbayya, "My dear parents, don't fall into the magic trap of this sorcerer and sell away all your movable and immovable properties. I am considering you both as my mother and father." With that I was freed from the sorcerer. The parents of Subbayya were happy. My eyes also became wet on seeing the happiness shining in their eyes. I prayed mentally to Srīpāda humbly to save me from a moral downfall since the wife of another man is to be considered as a mother. So, I prayed to Srīpāda to save me from the impending danger.

On the seventh day since my medical treatment commenced I said to the wife of Subbayya who was attending upon me, "What are you thinking about me? Are you believing that I am Subbayya really?" For that she said, "The marriage took place when I was two years old. Now I am twenty-two years old. No one except God knows whether you are my husband or not. Any male who enters fresh youth cannot remain steady when he sees his wife. Though you are undergoing all these troubles, you did not regard me as your wife. You did not even touch me. This is possible only

1 Food given as an offering
2 A ghost

for those who have very good culture. I do not have any opinion about you. I want to lead a virtuous life according to the traditions of the family. If you are my husband, do not leave this humble servant of yours. On the other hand, as my husband fled from the house twenty years back and as my marriage took place when I was quite ignorant, you can accept me as your wife. I will walk in your footsteps. Who is Srīpāda Srīvallabha about whom you always think? If He is a sadguru[1] I will also pray to Him to show an ethical solution to this knotty problem."

Her argument appeared proper to me also. Then I said, "Srīpāda Srīvallabha is Lord Dattatreya. He incarnated in this Kali Yuga[2]. Now He is in Kuruvapuram. He behaves according to our conceptions about Him. If we consider Him as sadguru, He grants us experience as a sadguru. If we consider Him as Paramātma[3] He will prove Himself as Paramātma. You can also chant the name of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. Your duty surely will be known to you. A solution acceptable to all will become available."

On that day, a mala jangam[4] came there. There were many books of palm leaves with him. He became a venerable person to all the residents of that locality within a short time. He was telling past, present and future events to all those who met him. He was telling that all those palm leaf books were nādi granthas[5] and it was called science of ramala[6] and all the predictions from those books would take place exactly as foretold. He came to the house of Subbayya's parents on their request. He gave some sea shells to me and asked me to cast the shells on the ground. He made some calculations and took a leaf from the palm leaf books and read out as, "The questioner is a Kannada Brahmin by name Shankar Bhatt. He will write the life history of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. In his previous birth he and another person were born in Mogalicharla village situated near Kandukuru town[7]. Both of them became very much interested in gambling. There is a famous self-manifested Datta temple in that village. He was born as a brother of that temple priest. In the absence of his

1 An accomplished teacher
2 Dark age
3 Super-self / super-soul
4 A Shaivaite worshipper
5 Astrological books containing predictions
6 A form of astrological divination based on the use of special dices
7 Town in Andhra Pradesh

brother, he was conducting temple worship and other rituals. He was indulging in gambling with his friend in the temple premises. That is a highly objectionable matter. One day he played the gambling game with his friend under peculiar stipulations. If his friend were to win, this man had to give him the amount of money stipulated. If this person were to win, the friend had to hand over his wife to this gentleman. Lord Datta was the witness to this deal. They solemnly swore to that effect and gambled.

"Lord Datta was observing that this highly reprehensible act was taking place in His very presence. Shankar Bhatt won in the gamble. The friend refused to hand over his wife to Shankar Bhatt. The dispute was referred to the elders. The elders of the caste assembled. They resolved that it was an unpardonable offence that such a misdeed took place in the very sacred presence of Lord Datta. They also resolved that hot boiled oil should be poured on the head of Shankar Bhatt who was enamoured with the wife of another person and who wanted to enjoy her in a crooked way. They further resolved that the genitals of the friend who staked his wife should be slashed to render him impotent and that both of them should be expelled from the village after execution of the decree. The resolution was duly executed. As Shankar Bhatt performed service to Datta for a short while, he was born in this birth as a person with some devotion to God. His friend took birth in a barber's house in the holy town of Tirupati with the name of Subbayya. With mental instability, he became mad and ran away after the marriage. The wife of Subbayya is innocent. As no offence was committed by her, the lunacy of Subbayya decreases on account of the efficacy of her matrimonial fidelity and Subbayya returns to this place on the next day after this science of ramala is heard. Shankara would get released on that day.

"On account of the grace of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, the seven-and-a-half year duration of harassment to Shankar Bhatt due to Saturn would elapse in seven-and-a-half days by making him suffer such above mentioned troubles. Those who swear in the name of God and make false and unrighteous declarations are severely punished by Lord Datta. For the cure of the mental instability of Subbayya, some portion of the merit[1] of Shankar

1 Here: Punya

Bhatt was transferred to the credit of Subbayya by Chitragupta[1]. People should understand the fact that the influence of karma works in the most subtle way. Therefore, they should perform good deeds and refrain from doing bad deeds. The horoscope of Srīpāda Srīvallabha will come to Pīthikapuram through Akshya Kumar, a follower of the Jain religion residing in the Tripura[2] province a few centuries after his incarnation ends. Before that, a book with the title Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam describing the divine sportive plays of Srīpāda will come to light."

How can I describe the mercy of Srīvallabha? The next day, Subbayya came to his house. His lunacy was completely cured. I treated Subbayya's wife as my sister. I took leave from the parents of Subbayya and reached Kanipakam[3] village in the Chittoor region[4].

The village Kanipakam was at a short distance from Chittoor. The temples of Srī Varadaraja Swamī, Srī Manikantheswara Swamī and Srī Vara Siddhi Vinayaka[5] are in that village. I had dārshan of Vara Siddhi Vinayaka and came out of the temple. There was a tall dog standing there. I was afraid and went back into the temple of Vara Siddhi Vinayaka. I meditated on God for some time and came out. There was one more dog of the same size along with that first dog. I feared that I would surely be bitten by those dogs. I again entered the temple of Vara Siddhi Vinayaka. The temple priest found my behaviour queer and asked me, "Sir, you are repeatedly going out and coming into the temple. What is the reason?" I told him about my fear. Then the priest said, "They won't harm anyone unnecessarily. Those dogs belong to a washerman. This washerman is a devotee of Datta. The washerman declares that Srī Datta has incarnated with the name of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. Even though there is no restriction for the entry of the washerman into the temple, he does not step into the temple. He sends his dogs. I pack Swamī's prasād into a bundle and hand it over to the dogs. They carry the bundle and go over to their master. You said you saw two dogs. I will give the prasādam only when all the four dogs come together. Let us see whether the other two dogs arrived." When we came out there were four dogs. The four dogs sur-

1 Assistant of the Lord of Death, who keeps the records of deeds
2 A small Indian state in North-East India bordering Bangladesh
3 Village in the Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh with a famous temple
4 A city in Andhra Pradesh
5 Famous temple dedicated to the elephant-headed god Ganesha

rounded me from all the four directions. The priest said, "You go to that washerman as per the wish of those dogs. It augurs well for you."

I realised that the events in my life were taking place according to the direction of Srīvallabha. I felt that from the incidents at the house of Subbayya, one should not mind too much for the distinctions of caste and religion. A pariah may be born as a Brahmin in the next birth and a Brahmin may take birth as a pariah in his next birth. I learnt that a living being amasses the virtues and sins earned by him and with that bundled load he wades through the stream of fate through successive births.

The discussion between Shankar Bhatt and Tirumala Das

As told by the priest, I went to the place where that washerman lived. The washerman was seventy years old. He came out of his hut and seated me with cordiality on a cot. Much of my pride due to my birth as a Brahmin was already destroyed. Whosoever they may be, all devotees of Srīpāda appeared as my close kith and kin. The washerman, called Tirumala Das, gave me the prasād of Srī Vara Siddhi Vinayaka temple. I accepted it as a prasād of Srīpāda Vallabha.

The advent of Aiynavilli Ganapati as Srīpāda Srīvallabha

Tirumala Das began to speak, "Sir, today is a good day! I had the good fortune of seeing you. I am eagerly waiting to inform you about the important events of Malyadripuram[1] and Pīthikapuram. My dear Shankar Bhatt, you received the prasādam of Vara Siddhi Vinayaka; you commence writing Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitamrutam book from today. You will receive the blessing of Srīvallabha in Kuruvapuram. I was a great Vedic scholar in my previous life. I was a great miser. At the time of my death I noticed that the calf that was just born was chewing an old rag. *As I concentrated my looks on the dirty linen at the time of my death, I am now born as a washerman. A person gets a birth according to his concentrated wishes at the time of his last breath at*

1 Malladi; village in Amaravati Mandal in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh

the termination of a birth. Due to my good deeds[1] in the past, I was born in Malyadripuram of the Palnad region in Gartapuri[2] district. This Malyadripuram became Malladi in the passage of time. In that village, there were two families with their surnames as Malladi. One is the family of Malladi Bapannāvadhanulu who was a great scholar. He belonged to the lineage of Sage Haritasa. The other one was Malladi Srīdharāvadhanulu who was also a great scholar. He belonged to the lineage of Sage Kaushika. The sister of Srīdharāvadhanulu, Rajamamba was given in marriage to Bapannāvadhanulu. Both the brothers-in-law were erudite pandits. Both of them went to Aiynavilli village in the region of Godavari for the great sacrifice of golden Ganapati[3]. Some savants argued that according to scriptures, Ganapati should receive the final fire ritual[4] with His trunk and grant His vision of bright golden hues. The two great scholars who were officiating over the conduct of the major sacrifice swore that they would strictly manage all proceedings according to the Vedic scriptures and that they would make Srī Maha Ganapati emerge before their eyes. At the end of the sacrifice, Ganapati granted His vision of golden coloured brilliance and accepted the last fire ritual with His trunk. He also declared that He would incarnate shortly on a Ganesh Chaturdhi day[5] with complete potencies and virtues. All those who attended the ritual[6] were amazed. There were three atheists in that congregation. They raised a controversy that all that was seen was only an exhibition of magic and hypnotism and that Ganapati did not figure at all in the final sacrifice. They argued that if it was genuine, Ganapati should grant them proof once again.

The greatness of Kanipaka Vinayaka

"Then the holy ash in the sacrificial pit took a human form and changed afterwards as Maha Ganapati. Then the Maha Ganapati form said, 'Fools!

1 Here: Punya
2 The city of Guntur in Andhra Pradesh
3 Name of the elephant-headed god Ganesha
4 Here: Homam
5 A festival in honour of Lord Ganesha, celebrated the 4th ascending moon phase in Virgo
6 Here: Yagna

Before Shiva killed Tripurasura[1]; before Vishnu subdued Bali[2]; before Vishnu obstructed Ravana[3] from taking away the Ātmalinga of Shiva; before Parvati Devi slayed Mahishasura[4]; before Ādi Sesha[5] shouldered the weight of the earth; before siddhas achieved occult powers; before Cupid conquered the world; and before celestials obtained their desires, they worshipped Me. I am the repository of all powers. I am omnipotent. Divine forces as well as devilish forces are within Me. I cause all obstacles. I am also the remover of all obstacles. Who do you think Dattatreya is? He is verily Dharma Sāsta[6] — the son of Hari and Hara[7]. Brahma[8] and Rudra[9] merged in Vishnu is the form of Datta. Ganapati and Shanmukha[10] merged in Dharma Sāsta form also is the form of Datta. Know it that Datta is always a personification of the Trinity. *As an indication that Maha Ganapati is in the form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, His incarnation will take place on Ganesh Chaturdhi*[11]. Be it known that the traits of Subramanya[12] will make Him a gyana avatar[13]. Note that His aspect of Dharma Sāsta will show that He is the beginning and origin of all righteous activities and rituals. His ensuing incarnation is not the result of coition between parents. Illuminating light takes a human form.

"'I am cursing you. In spite of seeing the personification of truth with eyes, one of you uttered falsehood. He would be born blind. The other one ridiculed the personification of truth instead of praising it with speech. He would be born mute. The third one would take birth as a deaf one because he paid a deaf ear to the truth told by so many truthful devotees. The three of you would take birth as brothers and after seeing My self-manifested figure you will be redeemed of your sins.'

1 A demon
2 A demon
3 A demon
4 A demon
5 The serpent of time carrying all the beings of creation
6 A divinity much worshipped in India; a son of Lord Shiva and Mohini
7 The Supreme God as unity of Vishnu and Shiva
8 The creator
9 The Lord of Cosmic Will and Vibration
10 The six-faced Kumara who embodies the Mars principle
11 A festival in honour of Lord Ganesha, celebrated the 4th ascending moon phase in Virgo
12 A name of Shanmukha
13 An incarnation of wisdom

"My dear, those three persons were born as brothers in Kanipakam. If the Trinity is abused, or Datta, the personification of the Trinity, is abused, countless calamities occur. These brothers took land measuring one kāni[1] and were cultivating it. In that field there was a ground well. They used to draw water from the well with the help of a lever and a bucket attached to it. There was a severe drought one year. The ground water level depleted. On one day when all the water dried up, the brothers attempted to remove sand with a shovel. The shovel hit a rock under the water and blood oozed out. When his hand touched the blood, the mute one gained speech. Water was rising in the well. The deaf one was cured of his disability on touching the water. The third one, who was blind, gained sight when he touched the rock in the water. That rock is the self-manifested Vinayaka statue. As the shovel hit the rocky icon on the head, blood started streaming out from there.

"To install that Vara Siddhi Vinayaka, Satyarushi[2] Bapannāvadhanulu and his brother-in-law Srīdharāvadhanulu visited that village. Vara Siddhi Vinayaka said to them, 'I came from Maha Bhūmi[3] to this world. I am incarnated in the earthen nature. This nature will undergo many changes in due course of time. My advent already took place in the nature of water, fire, air and heaven. The holy ash in the great sacrifice conducted in Aiynavilli took this form. I am instructing you about the future duties. The degrees of potency of kalās[4] in SrīShaila are on the wane. You have to harness the brilliant power of the Sun and deposit that power there. On the very day you perform shaktipāta[5] in SrīShaila, by My grace shaktipāta will take place in Gokarna[6], Kashi[7], Badari[8] and Kedar at the same time. The time is getting ripe for the incarnation of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. Srīdharā, I am changing your surname to be Srīpāda. Your family members belonging to the lineage of Kaushika shall henceforth thrive with the surname of Srīpāda.'

1 A measure of land about an acre
2 Rishi of Truth, the upholder of Truth
3 The Hindu Goddess of Earth
4 Divine manifestations with time
5 Transference of the energy of the Sun to the lingam in SrīShaila
6 Temple city in Karnataka
7 Now Varanasi or Benares; holy Indian city
8 Badrinath; a holy place in the state Uttarakhand in India and an important pilgrimage centre

"My dear Shankarā, Srīdharāvadhanulu and Bapannāvadhanulu migrated to Pīthikapuram. I witnessed many childhood plays of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. I will narrate them with more details tomorrow. I had a boy from my first wife. His name is Ravidas. He resides in Kuruvapuram village and is rendering appropriate services to Srīpāda. I am staying with my second wife and children in Kanipakam obiding by the orders of Srīpāda. Here I am living following my family profession. You will meet many great people in Pīthikapuram. You will learn many important things on meeting the noble Vaishya[1] Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti. Srīpāda used to call him with a change in name as Venkayyappa Sreshti. The protecting hand of Srīpāda is available for the family of Sreshti. Meet Vatsavāyi Narasimha Varma also. He has close affinity with Srīpāda Swamī. *The book to be written by you on the life of Srīpāda Srīvallabha will be blessed by Srī Charana. Except for the book you write, there will be no other way that could portray the comprehensive history of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. This is the order of Srī Charana."*

Victory unto Srī Srīpada Srīvallabha!

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

1 Merchant

Chapter 6

The Story of Narasāvadhāni

Next day, after finishing meditation and worship, Tirumala Das began to narrate. "Sir, Srīpāda Srīvallabha is the origin for everything that is movable and immovable in Creation. He is like a banyan tree. His partial incarnations[1] are like its hanging roots. The roots grow down from the branches of the banyan tree, though appearing to have an independent nature, their base is the banyan tree only. He is the source and refuge of all, from gods and demons to all living beings. All forces emanate from Him and again they merge in Him. For a person who reaches the peak of a mountain, all paths appear the same. In the same way, people of different traditions find synthesis in the philosophy of Datta. All beings are surrounded by an aura. When I was in Pīthikapuram, a yogi came there. He was indicating how much aura was around a particular statue or how long the aura of a particular person was and in which particular colour the aura extended. He visited Srī Kukkuteswara temple[2] and wanted to test the length and the colour of the aura of the self-manifested Datta. He had the vision of Srīpāda Srīvallabha in the place of Swayambhū Datta[3]. Profuse white light resembling lightnings spread around His head. Encircling this white light, a blue light was visible spreading in all directions. That divine personage said to the yogi, 'My dear, you are wasting valuable time in mad pursuits to reckon the lengthwise expansion of the subtle bodies of others. First you think about yourself. Death is imminent to you in a few days. So, think of the ways to get salvation. *Verily, I am Datta who is the origin of all doctrines and all truths! When great siddhas, great sages and great devotees invited Me with love, I incarnated in this Kali Yuga*[4] *in Pādagaya kshetra*[5]*.'*

1 Amsa Avatars; a part of God that has descended and taken to form
2 Temple in Pithapuram mainly dedicated to Lord Shiva
3 Self-born form of Lord Dattatreya
4 Dark age
5 Pithapuram, as the place where the feet of the asura (demon) Gaya fell

"On hearing the preachings of Swamī, old tendencies of the yogi got extinguished. His power of knowing the aura of the subtle body merged completely in Srīvallabha. Later, he had dārshan of Srīpāda Srīvallabha in His house and got blessed. The yogi said, 'The pure white light spread around Srīpāda indicates that Srīvallabha is very pure and is a complete yogāvatar. The blue light shows that He is filled with infinite love and mercy.'

"After the yogi left, an interesting discussion took place. 'How should the division of four castes be decided? Is it according to the differences in the aura of subtle bodies? Or is it according to the consideration of caste and gotra[1]? Which caste is eligible for the upanayanam[2] ritual according to the method described in Vedas? Which caste is eligible for upanayanam according to the method described in Purānas[3]? Is upanayanam related to the third eye located in the centre of the eyebrows? Or is it some other special thing? What is medhajanam[4]?' Such discussion continued very heatedly. The pandits could not arrive at a unanimous opinion.

"Srī Malladi Bapannāvadhanulu, famous as a true saint, was the president of the Brahmin Society of Pīthikapuram[5]. He was also called Bāpanāryulu. He was mainly worshipping Sun and Fire. He was invited to preside over a sacrifice that took place at Pīthikapuram. At the end of the sacrifice, there was torrential rain. All people were elated. Srī Vatsavāyi Narasimha Varma, a Kshatriya, requested Srī Bapannāvadhanulu to reside in their village. He refused Srī Varma's offer. Srī Bāpanāryulu used to accept only the honorary remunerations given during sacrificial rites. If that money was tainted, he was not accepting it. Srī Varma had a kapila cow[6]. He was very fond of it. Its name was Gayatri. That cow was giving abundant milk. It was very gentle in nature. Srī Varma came to know that Gayatri was missing. Srī Varma questioned Bāpanāryulu, who was an astrological pandit, about the cow. Srī Bāpanāryulu disclosed that the cow was with Khan Saheb, a butcher in Syamalāmbapuram[7]. He also

1 Lineage
2 Initiation into Gayatri; the Vedic investiture of the sacred thread
3 Quasi-religious legendary accounts
4 Brainy, intellectual type of people
5 Here: Pīthikapura Brahmana Samājam
6 According to the Indian scriptures offsprings of the divine cow Kamadhenu, also called the Mother of the World
7 Today the town of Samalkota/Samalarkota near Kakinada, in Andhra Pradesh

said that one should immediately go there and recover the missing cow since it would be killed. While sending a person to Syamalāmbapuram, Srī Varma laid a condition to Bāpanāryulu that, if Gayatri would come back according to the words of Srī Bapannāvadhanulu, he had to accept three putlu[1] land and a good house as gifts to the pandit. Bāpanāryulu was in a dilemma. If he would not accept the gift, Srī Varma would allow the cow to be killed. Then the sin of killing a cow[2] would fall upon him. He thought that accepting the gift was better than becoming exposed to the sin of cow slaughter. Gayatri was rescued. The residents of Pīthikapuram were fortunate. Srī Bapannāvadhanulu became the owner of a land and he also received as a gift a house for living. *Srī Bāpanāryulu had a son by the name of Venkāvadhani and a daughter by the name of Sumatī. The horoscope of Sumatī had all auspicious features and her gait resembled the royal walk of an empress. So, she was named as Sumatī Maharani*. The name and fame of Srī Bāpanāryulu spread in all directions.

"A Brahmin boy named Appala Lakshmi Narasimha Raja Sarma with the surname Ghandikota came to Pīthikapuram from Ayinavilli, a village in Godavari region. He hailed from the lineage of sage Bharadwaja, Apasthamba Sutra[3] and belonged to Velanati Vaidika sect. There was the idol of Kālāgni Shamana Datta[4] in his house. During the time of worship, that idol was talking to Raja Sarma, and was giving him instructions. Appalaraja Sarma lost his parents in his childhood. One day while worshipping, Kālāgni Shamana directed Raja Sarma to complete his education under the guidance of Malladi Bapannāvadhani belonging to Haritasa gotra, Apasthamba sutra and Vaidika Velanati sect. So, Raja Sarma came to Pīthikapuram. As per Datta's order, Srī Bāpanāryulu provided boarding facilities in his house to Raja Sarma who came to him as a student. He did not allow Raja Sarma to beg for food in various houses. Srī Bāpanāryulu used to worship Lord Shiva during the time of Sani-pradosha[5]. The ladies of the house were performing religious ceremonies to Lord Shiva during the

1 A measure for a unit of land that produces an equal amount of grain for 2,400 to 3,000 seers
2 Here: Gohatya
3 The branch of the Dharma Sastras (Hindu law books) to which a particular individual Brahmin owes his lineage to
4 One of the sixteen Avatars of Lord Dattatreya, as the fire of time
5 Worship of Sani (the embodiment of Saturn) or Lord Shiva on Saturday evening

time of Sani-pradosha. In ancient times Nanda and Yashoda[1] performed worship of Shiva during the time of Sani-pradosha. As a result, they were blessed with the fortune of bringing up Srī Krishna. Srī Narasimha Varma, Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti and some other prominent Vaishyas[2] were participating, unfailingly, in the worship of Shiva along with Srī Bāpanārya.

The voice that came from Srī Kukkuteswara Shiva lingam. The marriage of Sumatī and Appalaraja

"Once during the Sani-pradosha time, after the worship of Lord Shiva, a brilliant electric lustre beamed from Srī Kukkuteswara Shiva lingam[3]. Then a profound voice was heard saying, 'My dear Bāpanāryā! Give your daughter Sumatī Maharani in marriage to Appalaraja Sarma without any hesitation. It will be beneficial to the universe. No individual in this animate or inanimate Creation has any authority to violate this great decision. This is the decision of Lord Datta.'

"This voice was heard by Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti, Narasimha Varma and all those who were present. All of them were astonished. Information was sent to relatives, kith and kin of Raja Sarma in Ayinavilli. The marriage of Raja Sarma with Sumatī Maharani was decided. It was a regrettable matter that Raja Sarma did not even have a house. Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti said that he had many houses and that he would offer one of them to Raja Sarma. However, Raja Sarma would not accept any donation. Shreshti spoke with Raja Sarma's relatives and arranged for the evaluation of the worth of that part of the house in Ayinavilli that Raja Sarma would own as an inheritor. It was valued as worth one varahā[4]. The house of Sreshti was valued at a minimum of twelve varahās. Raja Sarma expressed his inability to pay the difference of eleven varahās. Then Sreshti stated that he would sell his house to Raja Sarma for one varahā only. Sreshti said, 'If you object to take the house as a gift, you take the house by paying one varahā.' All of them agreed that what Shreshti said was in accordance with the dharma.

1 Foster parents of Lord Krishna
2 Members of the merchant community
3 A self-manifested Shiva lingam
4 A coin of money that equals to four Indian Rupees.

"The marriage of Sumatī Maharani and Appala Lakshmi Narasimha Raja Sarma took place amid the chanting of Vedas by great Vedic scholars. The marriage was conducted in a grand manner with the accompaniment of auspicious melodies from musical instruments. *The incarnation of Srīpāda Srīvallabha came to dispel the darkness of ignorance. He arrived to remove the limping progress of people in physical and spiritual matters. Therefore, Lord Datta commanded the deity of time*[1] *and the deity of action*[2]*. In pursuance of His command, a blind boy representing gloomy ignorance*[3] *and a lame boy representing the halting progress in worldly and supra-worldly spheres were born to Raja Sarma.* Sumatī and Raja Sarma were greatly dismayed that their two children were disabled. There is a famous Vigneswara[4] temple in Ayinavilli. Once their relatives brought the holy offering[5] of that Lord Vigneswara to Pīthikapuram. Sumatī and Raja Sarma received the maha prasād. On that night, Sumatī Maharani had the dārshan of Irāvata[6] in a dream. Over the next few days, a conch, a wheel, a mace, a lotus, a trident, various deities, sages, siddhas, yogis and other similar holy persons appeared in her dreams. After few days, she experienced divine revelations even in her wakeful state. Upon closing her eyes, yogis in samadhi and munis with divine glows and different lights were giving dārshan like figures on a screen.

"When Sumatī Maharani consulted her father Bāpanārya, he said that all those signs indicated the birth of a great person[7] with complete auspicious features. The uncle of Sumatī Maharani, Srīdhar said, 'Sumatī,

- there is a relationship between Visakha[8] — the birth star of Ravi[9] — and the incarnation of Srī Rama.
- similarly, there is a relationship between Krittika — the birth star of Chandra[10] — and the incarnation of Srī Krishna.

1 Kāla
2 Karma
3 Ajnana
4 Name of the elephant-headed god Ganesha
5 Maha Prasād
6 The elephant of Indra
7 Here: Maha Purusha
8 One of twenty-seven star constellations (Nakshatras), like the following birth stars
9 The Sun
10 The Moon

- there is a relationship between the planet Mars, born in Pūrvāshada star, and the incarnation of Srī Lakshmi Narasimha.
- there is a relationship between the planet Budha[1], born in Sravana star, and the incarnation of Buddha.
- there is a relationship between the planet Jupiter, born in Pūrvaphalguni star, and the incarnation of Vishnu.
- there is a relationship between the planet Venus, born in Pushyami star, and the incarnation of Bhargava Rama[2].
- there is a relationship between the planet Saturn, born in Rēvati star, and the incarnation of Kurma[3].
- there is a relationship between the planet Rāhu[4], born in Bharani star, and the incarnation of Varāha[5].
- there is a relationship between the planet Ketu[6], born in Aslesha star, and the incarnation of Matsya[7].

The time you asked me was a time of divine secrecy. I presume that Lord Datta, who controls the existence and fate of crores[8] and crores of planets, stars and greater universes, may Himself be born.'

Lord Datta's grand opulence

"Sumatī Maharani told this to Raja Sarma. Raja Sarma said that he would ask Kālāgni Shamana Datta himself during the time of worship. It was a rule that during the worship of Kālāgni Shamana no other person should see. At the end of the worship, Datta would come in human form, sit in front of Raja Sarma and talk to him. Datta would later merge into the idol. This used to happen daily. Raja Sarma did not submit petty matters or selfish problems to Datta. That day during the time of worship, Datta appeared

1 Mercury
2 Parashurama, the 6th avatar of Vishnu
3 The 2nd avatar of Vishnu as a tortoise
4 North Node, ascending node of the Moon
5 The third avatar of Vishnu as boar
6 South Node, descending node of the Moon
7 The first avatar of Vishnu as fish
8 Indian number; a crore corresponds to ten millions

very pleased. After the worship, Datta sat before Raja Sarma. He called, 'Come Srīdhara!' and a form emerged from Datta and sat immersed in meditation in front of him. Datta again made a sign with his finger and called, 'Come Srīdhara!' Immediately that form merged in Datta. Raja Sarma was wondering at this. Lord Datta told Raja Sarma, 'The form you have just seen is one of My partial manifestations that will come in the ensuing years. Whenever I call, even the liberated souls who merged in Me have to come out immediately. When I order to depart, they should disappear at once. My sportive excellence is not just limited to the earth. All the globes in the universe are play-balls in My hands. If I kick once with My leg, one is thrown away billions of miles! I am beyond birth and death.'

"Saying so, He touched the centre in between the eyebrows of Raja Sarma. Immediately it dawned upon Raja Sarma that he was born as Vishnu Datta in one of the yugas and his wife was born as Somidevamma also called Susīla. He remembered all the past. Srī Datta said, 'When I appeared before you in that yuga, I told you to ask for any boon. You could not ask a proper boon. You invited me to your house for partaking meals on the day of the ceremony of your ancestors. I took meals along with the Sun and Fire gods and thereby gave permanent residence status in Brahma Loka[1] to your forefathers. I want to incarnate as Srīpāda Srīvallabha. For the last hundred years I have been giving My dārshan as Srīpāda Srīvallabha to yogis and great people on this earth. In Treta Yuga[2], Sage Bharadwaja conducted Sāvitra Kāthaka Chayanam[3] sacrifice in Pīthikapuram. The holy ashes of that sacrificial fire formed into huge mountains. Hanuman carried those ashes to heaven, earth and Patala[4] worlds. In Martya Loka[5], those ashes were thrown in Dronagiri of the Himalayan region and in some other regions. While Hanuman was carrying those ashes, one small piece fell in Gandharvanagar[6]. Gandharvanagar is the holy confluence of Bhima and Amaraja rivers. After retracing My incarnation as Srīpāda Srīvallabha, I will be born as Srī Narasimha Saraswati in Mīna[7]

1 Stay in the world of Brahma
2 The second of the four yugas
3 A ritual to the Sun
4 The netherworld
5 Region in which the human beings live with materialized human bodies
6 Ganagapura; village in the Kalaburagi district of Karnataka, where Srī Narasimha Saraswati lived the last twenty years of His life
7 The zodiac constellation Pisces

lagna[1]. I will display many miracles in Gandharvanagar and will remain for 300 years in tapo samādhi[2] in the Kadali Vana of SrīShaila. After that, I will live in Prajnapura[3] with the name of Swamī Samartha and will leave My mortal body when Saturn enters Mīna rāsi[4].'

"Raja Sarma explained to his wife the announcements of Lord Datta. Bāpanāryulu, the Satya Rishīswar[5] said, 'My dear Raja Sarmā, you are a meritorius person who offered meals during the annual ceremony of your ancestors to Lord Datta, the Sun God and Fire God in the ancient times. Datta in any form may ask for meals during this birth. Even if that happens to be a day of ceremony in memory of the manes and even if the revered guests have not taken meals, offer meals to Datta when He asks without any hesitation. My dear Sumatī, please keep a note of these things carefully.'

"Shankar Bhatt, the līlas of Lord Datta are unprecedented, unthinkable and unheard of so far.

The birth of Srīpāda Srīvallabha

"On a Mahālaya Amāvāsya[6] day, Raja Sarma was making arrangements for the ceremony of his ancestors. Then a cry of supplication, 'Bhavati! Bhikshām Dehi!'[7] was heard at the entrance of the house in the street. Sumatī Maharani gave alms to the avadhūta[8]. He told her to request for any boon. Sumatī said to the avadhūta, 'Sir! You are an avadhūta. Your words are self-fulfilling ones. Elders are saying that the incarnation of Srīpāda Srīvallabha will be attracted towards the earth very shortly. In

1 Ascendant, the zodiac sign that is rising at the time of birth
2 One of the deepest stages of meditation where the outside sense world is not perceived at all
3 City of Akkalkot in Maharashtra
4 The zodiac sign
5 Rishi of Truth, the upholder of Truth
6 The last day of the fortnight of descending moon phases in the month of Aswayuja (September-October) is celebrated as the day of ancestor worship
7 Literally: "Whichever honourable person is present, please give alms." The celibate spiritual student is expected to go out of the ashram and beg householder families for alms for himself and his guru, to inculcate a sense of humility.
8 Someone who is freed from all worldly bonds

what form is Lord Datta moving now? It is heard that Lord Datta is moving on this earth from the last one hundred years. You told me to ask for any wish. I have a desire to see the form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha.'

"On hearing those words, the avadhūta broke into a roaring laughter that shook the worlds. Sumatī Maharani felt that the whole universe in her vicinity disappeared in a trice. A sixteen-year-old good-looking boy in the attire of a sage appeared before her and said, 'Mother, I am Srīpāda Srīvallabha. I am Datta. You wanted Me to show you Srīvallabha in the avadhūta form. To satisfy your desire, I am giving you the vision of Srīvallabha. You can ask Me for anything in this Srīvallabha form of Mine. You gave Me food. In return, I want to grant some boon. People of this world who do sinful acts intentionally will derive bad results. If good deeds are done intentionally, good results will be achieved. Performing good deeds without any desire is called akarma. For akarma, one should be given another result without taking into account the merit or sin. That is under the control of God. Srī Krishna told Arjuna to kill the Kauravas because he did akarma. Arjuna did not get sin for such killings. The killing of the Kauravas was a divine decision. You and your husband did lot of akarma. Therefore, something has to be given to you for the welfare of the world. Express your wish without any hesitation. I will definitely grant it.'

The desire of Sumatī Maharani after the vision of Lord Datta

"Sumatī Maharani saw the supernal auspicious figure of Srīpāda Srīvallabha and fell on His Feet and paid obeisance. Srīpāda Srīvallabha lifted Sumatī Maharani from the ground and said, 'Mother, it is a ludicrous matter that a mother should fall on the feet of her child. It diminishes the life span of the child also.' Then Sumatī submitted, 'Lord Srīpāda Srīvallabhā, You called me mother! So, you agree that I am the mother and you are my child. Your words come true, so make that word true. You should take birth as our son.' Then Srī Charana spoke thus, 'May it be so.[1] I will be born in the same form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha which you witnessed now. A mother falling on the feet of the child results in the diminution of the life span of the child. I will not violate the principles of righteous conduct and destiny.

1 Here: Thadhāsthu

Therefore, I will live for only sixteen years as your child.' For that Sumatī began to lament, 'Oh, what an offence has happened. Is the life only for sixteen years?' Then Srīpāda said, 'Mother, I will follow whatever you say for sixteen years as your son. After sixteen years, a boy has to be regarded as a friend and no restrictions should be imposed. You should not compel Me to marry. You must give permission to Me to become an ascetic and wander freely. If you coerce Me against My intent, I will not remain in your house.' After saying that Srīpāda quickly left the place.

"Sumatī Maharani was dumb-founded for some time. She explained to her husband all that transpired. Appalaraja Sarma said, 'Sumatī, don't grieve. Your father has already hinted that Srī Datta would visit our house seeking alms in this fashion. Srī Datta is an ocean of mercy. Let the birth of Srīpāda Srīvallabha take place. Afterwards we may think about other things.'

"The news that an avadhūta visited the house of Appalaraja Sarma spread in the town. It was discussed that alms[1] was offered to an avadhūta even before the Brahmins took their meals on the day of Mahālaya Amāvāsya, which was of utmost importance to the manes. Srī Bapannāvadhanulu said, 'The birth of Srīpāda Srīvallabha is known to all. To prostrate before an avadhūta is also proper. So, there is no lapse on the part of Sumatī. To prostrate before a child may shrink the life span, but to prostrate before an avadhūta is not wrong.'

"The Brahmins of Pīthikapuram were very jealous about this matter. One scholar among them known as Narasāvadhānulu was highly envious. On amāvāsya day, all people would be busy in performing commemorative ceremonies to their forefathers. It became a difficult problem to procure Brahmin guests for the ritualistic feasts. However, Bāpanāryulu said that no difficulty would arise in the house of Appalaraja Sarma. Srī Raja Sarma was in meditation of Kālāgni Shamana[2]. In the meanwhile, three guests arrived. The commemorative function of the forefathers was conducted without any obstacle.

"My dear Shankar Bhatt, on that particular day it became an important debatable point whether Vaishyas have the authority for a Vedic sacred thread ceremony. The council of Brahmins was assembled. A scholar

1 Here: Bhiksha

2 One of the sixteen Avatars of Lord Dattatreya, as the fire of time

named Āsutosh of Navadwīp from Bengal came to Pādagaya kshetra[1]. He had old nādi books with him. He was also invited to the council of pandits. Srī Bāpanāryulu said that in spiritual discipline, 'Brahmins, Vaishyas, and Kshatriyas stand on an equal footing. Therefore, according to ancient dharma, Vedic upanayanam was admissible to those castes. For others, upanayanam in the Puranic tradition could be performed, if they so desire. *Caste, gender and age are no impediments for attaining wisdom. There were Vaishya sages in siddhas and a Vaishya sage named Lābhāda became a siddha by the grace of Lord Datta. A man would derive benefits in all endeavours if the grace of Lābhāda Maharshi*[2] *is available.'*

"Srī Bāpanārya's decision was acclaimed by all. However, this decision became painful to a pandit known as Narasāvadhani. He was an adept in dogmatic argument. He was a devotee of Goddess Bagalāmukhi[3]. He worshipped that goddess every day. He would wash his face before a commencement of arguments; he would chant the incantation of Bagalāmukhi. Then he would proceed to argue. It was difficult to defeat him at that time. Srī Bāpanāryulu was a pious one who recited Gayatri mantra many crores[4] of times. Both of them never indulged in a confrontation during arguments. Narasāvadhani washed his face and meditated upon the mantra. *Srīpāda Srīvallabha had a very close relation with His maternal grandfather from a very young age. So, He was accompanying His grandfather to the assembly of Brahmins*[5]. No one was obstructing that charming young boy. That day Narasāvadhani felt uneasy with the presence of Srīvallabha in the meeting. Narasāvadhani thought it was wrong for a young lad to attend a conference of great scholars. Before commencing arguments, after reciting Bagalāmukhi mantra, he questioned Srīpāda as to why He came there. For that Srīpāda replied, 'Grandad, it is not proper to attend uninvited. Since you called Me in the prescribed systematic manner, I came. I will go if you ask Me to go. What is it for Me? I do not

1 Pithapuram, as the place where the feet of the asura (demon) Gaya fell
2 A muni (monk) from the Vaishya community of an earlier yuga, now born as Srī Bāpanāryulu, the father of Sumatī Maharani and the grandfather of Srīpāda Srīvallabha
3 One of ten wisdom goddesses in Hinduism; she smashes the devotee's misconceptions and delusions
4 Indian number; a crore corresponds to ten millions
5 Here: Brahmin parishad

care. I am a small boy and a free person.' Narasāvadhani thundered that Srīpāda should leave. Srī Raja Sarma took his son away. Narasāvadhani, who wanted to start arguments, could not speak. In spite of a great effort, no word came out of his mouth. Āsutosh, who was watching all this, laughed hilariously. The decision of Bāpanāryulu was carried out in the meeting. Vedic upanayanam was prescribed for Vaishyas.

"There was a discussion about the nādi books available with Āsutosh. It was suggested in the nādi books that the birth time of Srīpāda Srīvallabha should be calculated according to the mathematical formulae given in the Sāndra Sindhu Veda[1]. *It was determined that Srīpāda was born in the early hours of Ganesh Chaturdhi*[2] *in Chitra star, in Simha*[3] *lagna*[4] *and Tula*[5] *rāsi*[6]. *It was mentioned that Srīpāda was an incarnation of Srī Datta, and as His Feet were marked with all auspicious features, He bears a worthy name as Srīpāda Srīvallabha. It was further noted that His horoscope should not be given to anyone and that it will reach in course of time through Akshya Kumar of Tripura belonging to the Jain religion. All that would happen according to the divine plan and it would reach Pithapuram as a part of divine play.*

"Āsutosh went to the house of Srīpāda Srīvallabha to see Him. Srīvallabha said, 'Today's star is Chitra. I am very much pleased if anyone worships Me on the day of My birth star. You came with pure devotion. So, I am blessing you. Ask for anything you desire.' Then Āsutosh said, 'Lord, I learnt that Narasāvadhāni is a devotee of Bagalāmukhi. I thought of having a vision of Ambika through his assistance. My desire became a hope in vain. I understood that Ambika was furious with him.' Srīpāda immediately said, 'I am verily that Ambika whom he is worshipping! Ambika, who was with the subtle body of Narasāvadhani until then, merged in Me the moment he asked Me to leave. *I am the personification of all gods and goddesses.* Have the fortune of Ambika dārshan.' Saying so, He appeared as Bagalā-

1 A mystical Sanskrit work written on palm leaves dealing with time and the incidents of the future
2 A festival in honour of Lord Ganesha, celebrated the 4th ascending moon phase in Virgo
3 The zodiac sign of Leo
4 Ascendant, the zodiac sign that is rising at the time of birth
5 The zodiac sign of Libra
6 The zodiac sign where the moon is present on the date of birth.

mukhi before Āsutosh. Fully satisfied, Āsutosh left for Penusila Kona[1]. He reached the land of penance of Kanva Maharshi in the forest of Penchala Kona as per the instructions of Srīpāda. Srīpāda told him that He would be born in Maharashtra in the Vajasaneyi branch of Sage Kanva. He added that He will bless him when He incarnates again and that he will be one among His chief disciples who will witness all the extraordinary miracles as a treat for his eyes. Srīpāda asked him to travel immediately."

Wonderful sights seen at the time of Srīpāda's birth

Then I said thus, "Sir! Please narrate some more miracles of Srīpāda witnessed by you and make me blessed." Then Tirumala Das began, "Shankar Bhatt, Narasāvadhānulu was enraged with Bāpanāryulu. He wanted to insult him somehow or other. He thought that Bāpanāryulu was responsible for him to lose favour with the deity Bagalāmukhi. He propagated that Bāpanāryulu nullified his efficiency of that mantra through some tāntrik application. He was much more troubled about the details relating to the incarnation of Srīvallabha. He argued that the nādi books were unreliable, and that it was a sacrilege on the part of Bāpanāryulu to offer food to a fish-eating Bengali Brahmin. He further argued that no man can be an incarnation of Pūrna-Brahma[2] and that a young lad like Srīpāda cannot be Lord Datta, who is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient. He mischievously misrepresented the supra-normal activities of Srīpāda who was uttering pranava (Oum) from His infancy; who was speaking about scriptures in Sanskrit even when He was rollicking in the cradle; who was exhibiting extraordinary intelligence disproportionate to His age. Narasāvadhānulu spread rumours that a Brahmin Vedic scholar who died took shelter in the body of the boy and therefore was speaking in this unnatural way. He maintained that the self-manifested Datta in the Srī Kukkuteswara temple was the real benefactor and that it was wrong to treat the boy as Datta. *When Srīpāda Srīvallabha was born, a cobra with three hoods held its hoods as an umbrella for Srīpāda, wherever He was kept, for eighteen days. He came out of the mother's womb as a dazzling illumination. Sumatī*

1 Penchala Kona, Nellore District
2 The complete God

Maharani fainted immediately after He was born. Auspicious musical notes from musical instruments were heard from the labour room. After some time, an invisible voice warned all people to leave the room. Four Vedas, eighteen Purānas, great persons arrived in the shape of brilliant lights to greet Srīpāda. Sacred Vedic mantras were heard outside the room. Silence spread after some time. This astonishing incident was perplexing and beyond comprehension even to Bāpanāryulu.

The sportive plays of Srīpāda's childhood

"A year elapsed since the birth of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. He started attending the conferences of scholars along with His grandfather Srī Bāpanārya, even when he was a child of few months age.

"Srī Charan used to walk freely, deliver discourses on scriptures and perform wonderful miracles even when he was a boy of few months age. The residents of Pīthikapuram were thinking that a great scholar who died entered into the boy and was performing all these miracles. They were also thinking that Bāpanārya and Raja Sarma were wrongly considering Him as an incarnation of Datta without giving proper medical treatment to the boy and that was not an acceptable matter. As Pīthikapuram is Pādagaya kshetra[1], an important kshetra for the departed ancestors, and as there were some tāntriks[2] who could speak with dead souls resided in Pīthikapuram, such arguments gained strength. As I came from Malyadripuram, I was washing the clothes in the houses of Srī Bāpanārya and Srī Raja Sarma. The washerman who was washing the clothes in the house of Narasāvadhāni died due to old age. He had one son who migrated to Kokanadam called Vāyasapura agrahāram[3]. Therefore, I was engaged to wash the clothes in the house of Narasāvadhāni. Since I was attached to the family of Srī Bāpanārya from my childhood, I gradually changed to be a person having auspicious will. The flame of spiritualism glowed in me. Instead of personally washing the clothes of Srī Narasāvadhāni, I entrusted the work to my eldest son Ravidas. If I saw Narasāvadhāni on any day, I used to get disturbance in my stomach and I was

1 Pithapuram, as the place where the feet of the asura (demon) Gaya fell
2 Persons using trantric practices
3 The town of Kakinada

not in a position even to eat food on that day. I was able to wash the clothes of only those families who had auspicious desires.

The divine grace of Srīpāda on Tirumala Das

"Ravidas is my eldest son born to my first wife. Instead of washing Narasāvadhāni's clothes myself, I was getting the clothes of Narasāvadhāni washed by Ravidas. Narasāvadhāni somehow came to know about it. He ordered me to wash his clothes. Orders of elders are to be complied with. I washed the clothes while recollecting the name of Srīpāda. Ravidas took them to the house of Narasāvadhāni. Strangely, Narasāvadhāni felt as if scorpions and poisonous centipedes crawled on his body when he wore the washed clothes. However, there was no effect on other members of his family. Narasāvadhāni was troubled as if his body was put on burning fire. The clothes were like apparels of fire for him. He sent word for me. He told me that I introduced some evil spirit into his clothes through witchcraft and that I would be punished for this heinous act. He lodged a complaint with the judicial officer. The judicial officer decided that I was innocent. My dear Shankar Bhatt, the plays of Srīpāda are unthinkable. After I returned home from the judicial officer, Srīpāda came to our house as a fresh young person of sixteen years. From the time of His birth, Srīpāda was appearing to His devotees according to His chosen age. All of this appears quite natural to those who are acquainted with the sportive plays of Srīpāda. With utter excited amazement I submitted, 'Sir, You are born in a superior Brahmin caste. It is not good for you to come to the colony of washermen.' For that Srīpāda replied, 'Who do you think Narasāvadhāni is? He is a washerman carrying a load of sin on his head comparable to a washerman's bundle, whereas you are a washerman yearning for the knowledge of the Absolute[1]. Hence you are a superior Brahmin. Therefore, it is not unreasonable for Me to come here.' Then I fell on the feet of Srīpāda and sobbed. Seeing me with His ambrosial looks, He lifted me from the ground with His divine hands. He kept His divine hands on my head. Then my entire past life came to my memory. The yogic forces in

1 Here: Brahma jnana

me reached a state of momentum. The kundalini shakti[1] was activated. Srīpāda disappeared quietly with slow steps.

"Narasāvadhāni was growing thotakura in his house. The thotakura in his house was very tasty. He was not giving the vegetable to anyone even after their strong pleadings. Only when he was expecting great return from anyone, he was giving that thotakura to that person. Srīpāda requested His mother to cook thotakura curry. He asked her to collect the vegetable only from the house of Narasāvadhāni. This appeared as an impossible thing. His grandfather Bāpanāryulu said, 'My dear Srīpadā, tomorrow morning you better request Narasāvadhāni to give you thotakura. I will carry you to their house. If Narasāvadhāni will not oblige, you should not insist about that matter.' Srīpāda agreed to that.

"Next morning Bāpanāryulu carried Srīpāda to the house of Narasāvadhāni. Bāpanāryulu told Srīpāda that children should respect elders and ask for their blessings. Srīpāda agreed. Narasāvadhāni sat on the verandah of his house. He was having a shikha[2] on his head. A barber just came there and he was trying to shave Narasāvadhāni. Srīpāda, who was sitting on the shoulders of His grandfather, saw Narasāvadhāni and saluted him with folded hands. Narasāvadhāni was taken aback at this sudden happening. Srīpāda's penetrating looks fell on the shikha on the head of Narasāvadhāni. Automatically, the shikha of Narasāvadhāni fell down. He was confused and did not understand how his shikha fell down. Then Srīpāda said to His grandfather, 'Grandpa, the shikha at the top of Narasāvadhāni's head was very dear to him. Now it fell down on its own. It will not be nice for Me to now ask him for thotakura, which is very much loved by him. Why should I subject him to more misery when he is already having intense sorrow? Let's go to our house!' After that, Srīpāda never asked for thotakura.

"Narasāvadhāni came to know the pretense behind Srīpāda joining his hands in reverence to him. When Narasāvadhāni sat in meditation, a bright person closely resembling him came out of him. Narasāvadhāni asked him who he was and where he was going. That bright person said, 'I am the

1 The serpent powers lying coiled at the base centre in a human beings
2 A long tuft or lock of hair left on top or on the back of the shaven head of a male orthodox Hindu.

punya sarira[1] inside your body. You have recited Vedas numerous times so far. You worshipped the self-manifested Datta. When that very Datta incarnated as Srīvallabha you insulted Him. If you had at least one in ten thousandth degree of the love and affection you harbour for your thotakura and shikha towards Srīpāda, your birth would have been redeemed. Destruction of infatuation[2] is liberation[3]. You are shackled by the bonds of infatuation. You are going to face penury very shortly. To avert it, Srīpāda desired to take a donation of vegetables from you. Had you offered Him thotakura as requested, the impending poverty would have been neutralised. Not only that, you would have been granted with wealth. You have spoiled such an opportunity on your own. Even then Srīpāda is an ocean of mercy. He is going to conceal His present incarnation and will take another incarnation. At that time, you will take birth as a poor Brahmin. You will grow thotakura in your house even then. At the appropriate time I will re-enter your body. Afterwards Srīpāda will visit your house and eat the curry of thotakura cooked and served with love. He will grant you riches. I am, however, leaving you for the present. The salutation of Srīpāda was not intended for you. It was a command to me, an embodiment of your merit, to leave you and merge with Him. As you received the salutation of Srīpāda, you lost the merit personified in my form residing in you. Only the personified sin remained in you.' Saying so, the punya purusha merged in Srīpāda.

"From that time onwards, the living conditions of Narasāvadhāni deteriorated. No one cared for his word. The lustre that was in his body disappeared. Cholera spread in Pīthikapuram. Many people were dying. The doctors concluded that due to the pollution of the water, bacteria was growing and it was responsible for the spread of the epidemic. Fear-stricken people prayed to Bāpanārya to save them from the dreadful disease and to find out the ways prescribed by scriptures in the interest of people. They requested him to take suitable steps immediately.

"Srī Bāpanāryulu viewed the problem with his inner sight. He found out that the disease was caused by pollution in the airy hemisphere and not due to the pollution of water. The doctors bluntly said that the statement of Bāpanāryulu was against the tenets of medical science and, therefore, it was

1 Body of merit
2 Here: Moha
3 Here: Moksha

not acceptable. People were performing various pūjas[1] to the village goddess and offering many animal sacrifices to appease her. When an animal is killed, its life force would be forcibly released. By chanting of mantras, that life force would come under the control of the person offering the animal sacrifice. Bāpanāryulu stated that many yogic practices were available for increasing the prānic force, and that many sātwic[2] ways of worship existed; and sātwic modes of worship were to be adopted to propitiate the village goddess. In spite of that advice, people did not stop offering animal sacrifice.

"Some persons who had faith in Srīpāda Srīvallabha and His divine actions asked Srīpāda about this matter. Then Srī Charana told them that He ordered the village goddess not to ask for animal sacrifice and that she went to the sea-side for a bath, and that by offering milk pudding, Goddess Kāli would be pacified. He directed that the information should be widely made known to the people of the village and the nearby villages through a proclamation by the beat of a tom-tom on a leather drum. When asked who should be employed for the purpose, Srīpāda told them that Venkayya, who was suffering from cholera, was to be selected for the job and he must be told that it was His command.

"The faithful devotees of Srīvallabha went to Venkayya. Venkayya was nearing death. When the command of Srīpāda was conveyed, he fainted. After a gadhya[3], he became normal and regained complete health. This news created a wide discussion in Pīthikapuram. The proclamation by the beat of tom-tom was made by Venkayya. Bāpanārya wanted a big vessel filled with water to be placed in his presence. He chanted some mantras capable of destroying the poisonous creatures. Those poisonous worms from the airy region fell into the watery vessel making a fluttering sound. The impurity in the airy region was eliminated. The dreadful disease left Pīthikapuram.

"On Ganesh Chaturdhi[4], which happened to be the birthday of Srīpāda, Raja Sarma, along with his wife, took Srīpāda to the house of Bāpanārya. Whenever Srī Bāpanārya tried to observe the lotus feet of Srīpāda to see the auspicious signs, his eyes were dazzled with very brilliant lights. So,

1 Ceremonies
2 Pure
3 An Indian unit of time equalling to twenty-four minutes
4 A festival in honour of Lord Ganesha, celebrated the fourth ascending moon phase in Virgo

he could not see the auspicious signs of Srī Maha Vishnu. This was rather puzzling for him. On that day in the early morning, Bāpanārya saw divine footprints on the husk extracted from the pounded rice. Bāpanārya asked his daughter Sumatī, 'Ammā, who had gone this way?' Sumatī replied, 'Who else? Your beloved grandson went this way.' Those footprints appeared to belong to a boy of sixteen years. The grandfather took Srīvallabha into his lap and observed His Srī Charanams[1]. Then the dazzling lights that were appearing before his eyes previously were not to be seen. The divine features declaring that He was really the incarnation of Lord Datta appeared before him. He kissed the divine Srī Charanams and decided that the boy was verily Lord Datta. Then some words were uttered from the mouth of Bāpanārya effortlessly. There was no need for their grammatical correctness or for their flawless prosody.

"Srīpāda silently wiped the tears that trickled from the eyes of His grandfather. He said, 'Grandfather, you attracted the vital force from the Sun and transferred it to the Mallikarjuna Shiva linga in SrīShaila[2]. At the same time, the vital force from the Sun was attracted towards the Mahabaleswar[3] in Gokarna and the self-manifested Datta in Pādagaya kshetra[4]. I decided to charge the Gokarna kshetra with much more energy. My intention was to liquidate the undesirable vibrations of the people in Mahabaleswar into the *Ātma linga* of Parameswara[5] and transmit good vibrations to those who surrender to Me. In the same way I want to make the SrīShaila Mallikarjuna lingam also very powerful as it gives liberation by mere sight. You are a truthful sage. You decided that I would not be short-lived because My mother had saluted My feet. I said that as My mother had prostrated on My feet in the form of Srīvallabha, I would live for a short span. To avoid conflict between our words, I intend to live in your house for only sixteen years. I have to grace the spiritual aspirants who desire liberation from the worldly bonds. You want that I should live forever. I would fulfill that also. *This magnificent divine shape bearing the name Srīpāda Srīvallabha would be concealed.*

1 Auspicious feet
2 Srī Bāpanāryahad channeled the energy of the Sun with a special ritual into a Shiva linga at Srisailam called Srī Saila Mallikarjuna lingam making it a powerful deity in that area.
3 A town in Maharashtra, where the source of the Krishna River is
4 Pithapuram, as the place where the feet of the asura (demon) Gaya fell
5 The highest God

Even after the advent as Narasimha Saraswati, this Srīpāda Srīvallabha form would stand as an eternal reality. After incarnating as Narasimha Saraswati, I would be in penance in Kadali Vana[1] *forest for 300 years. Afterwards, I take shape as Swamī Samartha in Prajnapur and transfer My life force into a pīpul tree*[2] *and merge in the Shiva linga at SrīShaila.'*

"Bāpanārya regarded all this with wonder and astonishment. The first birthday celebration of Srīpāda was held very grandly in His grandfather's house.

"A strange thing happened that day in Pīthikapuram. When Narasāvadhāni, the priest and some others went to the Srī Kukkuteswara temple in the morning they found the idol of the self-manifested Datta missing. The news of the disappearance of the idol spread like wildfire in the village. A tāntrik, who was jealous of Narasāvadhāni, undertook propaganda that Narasāvadhāni, who was cultivating evil practices, was the one who caused the disappearance of the idol. Then the Brahmin community of Pīthikapuram resolved to thoroughly search the house of Narasāvadhāni. When asked, Bāpanārya said that truth will come out in due course of time, and that he felt silence was more appropriate at that time. He also added that he would speak at an opportune time.

"When some portions in the house of Narasāvadhāni were dug out, human skulls and some articles connected with evil rituals were found. Even though Narasāvadhāni was innocent, he was stamped as a practitioner of witchcraft and evil worship. His health was going down day after day. There was a barren cow in his house. It was also treated as an ox and used for agricultural activities. Narasāvadhāni did not feed it properly. The tāntrik introduced an evil spirit into that cow. It broke its tethers and became wild. It pricked the inmates of the house with its horns and destroyed the thotakura garden developed with love by its master. No one could bind it with a rope.

"It was the day of the annual ceremony of Narasāvadhāni's mother's death. Gāris[3] and some more victuals were prepared sumptuously. That cow ate the preparations in the cooking place of the house of Narasāvadhāni. The guests of the ceremony finished their meals by that time, but the

1 Literally: forest of plantain trees; a cave located near Srisailam
2 Ficus Religiosa, sacred fig tree
3 Round cakes made of black gram

housemates had not yet eaten. Srīpāda was compelling His father Raja Sarma that they should go to the house of Narasāvadhāni. Raja Sarma took Srīpāda with him and stood in front of the house of Narasāvadhāni. In the meanwhile, the cow of Narasāvadhāni came out. Srīpāda asked His father to keep Him on the ground. The cow went around Srīpāda thrice, and afterwards it prostrated before the holy feet of Srīpāda and died.

"This incident was commented upon by the people of Pīthikapuram in various ways. They narrated that poison was mixed inadvertently in the gāris; the holy guests of the ceremony were luckily saved, but the cow died of the poison. It was also held that Narasāvadhāni would be guilty of killing a cow and that sin would affect him.

"These comments were causing lot of anguish to Narasāvadhāni. As the cow circumambulated Srīpāda and died, many people considered that Srī Charan possessed extraordinary divine qualities. As Raja Sarma was having some knowledge of ayurvedic medicine, he was treating Narasāvadhāni on his request. Whenever Raja Sarma was going to the house of Narasāvadhāni, Srīpāda was also going with him. In spite of the greatness of Raja Sarma as a physician, the health of Narasāvadhāni deteriorated further. One day, Narasāvadhāni died.

"Rumours, false propaganda, attempts at twisting untruth as truth and vice versa were very much rampant in Pīthikapuram. Raja Sarma gave medicine with good intention, but his endeavour did not succeed. After all, birth and death are under the control of God! Some people thought that Narasāvadhāni died on account of a tāntrik application by a tāntrik. Some others thought that Raja Sarma did not treat Narasāvadhāni properly due to animosity and that he would have lived if treated by another doctor. Some others opined that it was unreasonable to regard Srīpāda Srīvallabha as an incarnation of Datta because Narasāvadhāni died in spite of the daily visits by Srīvallabha to Narasāvadhāni's house of. Hence, Srīpāda was an ordinary boy. That was how some people thought about the matter. It was also resolved that as a cow died from poison, Narasāvadhāni also died from the terrible sin of killing a cow and that some more corpses would go to the burial ground from that house. It was suggested that for the removal of the sin of cow-killing, the following measures were to be taken: liberal donations should be given to the Brahmins, a golden idol of a cow should be donated to the Brahmins, propitiatory sacrifices should be conducted for forty days, and

free meals should be served to the Brahmins every day during the period of sacrifices. These were measures for removing the sin of killing a cow.

"To organise all the above programmes, the entire property of Narasāvadhāni had to be sold. This matter was also like a thunderbolt to the family of Narasāvadhāni.

"The corpse of Narasāvadhāni was carried to the burial ground for the funeral. Raja Sarma, Srīpāda and Srī Bāpanārya consoled the family members of Narasāvadhāni. The wife of Narasāvadhāni held the hands of Srīpāda and wept, 'Srīpadā! I was going to perantums[1] at any distance for a pinch of turmeric and kumkum[2] [for the blessing of marital longevity]. If you are Datta, is it impossible for You to revive your Narasanna tāta[3]?' Srīpāda with an ambrosial heart wiped her tears with His divine hands and remained silent. The funeral procession started. Raja Sarma, Srīpāda, Srī Bāpanārya, all of them participated in the funeral procession. The eldest son of Narasāvadhāni was trying to light the funeral pyre. Two drops of tears from the eyes of Srīpāda fell on the ground. With a thundering sound, Srīpāda said, 'Oh! I saw a son lighting the pyre of a dead father, but I have not seen a son lighting the pyre of a living father.'

"Then all people there looked at Him with astonishment. Srīpāda slowly touched with His thumb the centre point of the eyebrows of Narasāvadhāni on the pyre and again touched His own centre of the eyebrows. Narasāvadhāni was slowly regaining consciousness. Narasāvadhāni returned home in a joyful procession[4] with all those who followed his corpse in the funeral procession.

"As Srīpāda touched the centre point of his eyebrows, Narasāvadhāni realised the subtle secrets of the principle of karma. He understood that the barren cow in his house was his mother and the old ox in his house was his father. Since both of them ill-treated his paternal grandmother in her old age, they took such low births and laboured for him in a servile manner. It was also clearly envisioned by him that the mother cow, while dying, requested Srīpāda to drink its milk and for that Srīpāda assured that He would drink its milk in the next birth when it would be born as a barren cow.

1 Mutual visits of married women during a festival
2 A fragrant red cosmetic
3 Grandfather
4 Here: Sobha

"Narasāvadhāni also began to grasp the particular details of the subtle worlds. For instance, it became clear to him that the tāntrik who harmed him with tāntrik application would die soon and that he would become a Brahmanic fiend in the next birth and that Srī Charana as an ascetic would show mercy on him then. He also knew that in the next life he would also be favoured by Srīpāda, in the guise of an ascetic, with abundant wealth. Then Srī Charana would eat the preparations made from thotakura and would uproot the creepers of this green leafy vegetable with His own hands and would grant vessels filled with gold coins. Narasāvadhāni saw the future very clearly.

"The sportive plays of Srīpāda Srīvallabha are unprecedented and uncomparable. I will let you know tomorrow the benevolent advice of Srīvallabha to Narasāvadhāni and his wife and the way in which He showed mercy on them. Let us remember the name of Srīpāda Srīvallabha and spend some time in a bhajan[1] programme. Let us sing His name in a melodious chorus. Srī Charana moves in a subtle form in a place where His divine name is chanted. This is a literal truth."

I was immediately pleased and exalted because I got associated with such a great devotee as Tirumala Das.

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

1 Devotional singing in chorus

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 7

Description of Cosmic Spheres

The Greatness of the Biography of Srīpāda Srīvallabha

In the morning, Tirumala Das completed his daily worship and began to narrate, "My dear Shankar Bhat, *the divine life history of Srīpāda Srīvallabha is a divine elixir. It is unheard of, unprecedented, and undebatable. You have the good fortune of writing His biography only on account of the boundless grace of Srīpāda Srīvallabha on you. This great fortune, which is not available even to great scholars, is granted to you. This is only His will.*

The appearance of Srīpāda in many places at the same time

"After he got out of death, the attractive power of Narasāvadhāni decreased. In the past, when he was thinking of any person in his meditation, that person would come to him however far he might be. That power was now lost. People who were afraid of him and praised him previously were now not afraid of him. When a situation arose, they would tease him with bad talk. His financial state also started deteriorating. The means of getting daily food also decreased. He came into the street wailing at his miserable condition. At that time Bāpanārya was carrying his grandson on his shoulders. The house of Bāpanārya was situated at the corner of a street. Srī Charan was spending more of His time at His grandfather's house than at His own house. He was going freely to the houses of Srī Narasimha Varma and Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sresthi.

"Narasāvadhāni wanted to speak with Srīpāda. He wanted to hold the charming divine child in his arms and kiss Him. Narasāvadhāni saw Srīpāda, who was going with Bāpanārya. Srīvallabha looked at Narasāvadhāni and smiled. That smile was very bewitching. Then Narasāvadhāni went to

the house of Sresthi for some grocery items. There Srīpāda Vallabha was in the lap of Sresthi. Srīpāda extended His looks towards Narasāvadhāni and smiled sweetly. Narasāvadhāni returned to his home with grocery items and from there went to the house of Narasimha Varma. At that time, he saw in the house of Srī Varma that Srīvallabha was sitting on the shoulders of Srī Varma. Again, Srīvallabha extended a playful smile on seeing Narasāvadhāni. Narasāvadhāni saw Srīvallabha in the houses of His grandfather, Srī Varma and Srī Sresthi at the same time. He was in a dilemma thinking whether it was a dream or an illusion of Lord Vishnu.

"The people in the village were blaming him in different ways and were making fun of him. They were blaming him that he was responsible for the disappearance of the self-manifested idol of Datta in the Pādagaya kshetra[1]. Narasāvadhāni was roaming in the streets like a traveller without any destination. He reached home like a madman. His wife was grief-stricken seeing her husband as a mad person. She went inside the room of worship to vent to her agony with the God. What she saw was the most wonderful sight. Srīpāda Srīvallabha was in their worship room. There was no end to the joy of the couple. They begged Srīpāda to partake food with thotakura curry to be prepared by them. Srīpāda did not agree to that. *When the right time, cause and action come together, there will be a great opportunity. A wise person notices it and gets benefited.* An unwise person does not notice it and will lose the opportunity.

"At last Srīpāda agreed to dine in their house but not in the present life. He promised them that He would be born in the holy land of Maharashtra in the next birth under the name of Srī Narasimha Saraswati and that He would certainly visit their house and eat food with cooked thotakura curry. *With the powers of His Ganesha incarnation, which took place on a Srī Ganesh Chaturdhi*[2]*, another great person with the name of Gajanana*[3] *would be born after some centuries nearer to His birthplace. It may be possible to change the courses of the Sun and the Moon, but it would not be possible for anyone to alter the promises of Srīpāda. All the*

1 Pithapuram, as the place where the feet of the asura (demon) Gaya fell
2 A festival in honour of Lord Ganesha, celebrated the 4th ascending moon phase in Virgo
3 Gajanan Maharaj, birth date unknown, appeared February 1878 in Shegaon, Maharashtra, took samadhi on 8 September 1910.

living creatures in the Creation, including the five elements, have to obey His commands. In compliance with His promises, He is steadfast and truthful. Even when universes shake and aeons change, His sportive plays[1] *will still remain ever true and most modern.* In that chamber of worship, Srīpāda gave some beneficial advice to Narasāvadhāni and his wife. Those sacred beneficial preachings are useful to all devotees of Datta. The following conversation took place between Narasāvadhāni and Srīvallabha.

The dialogue between Srīpāda Srīvallabha and Narasāvadhāni in the pūja mandir. The preachings of Srīpāda to Narasāvadhāni

"For the questions of Narasāvadhāni, Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha replied with His preachings.
Question: 'Who are you? Are you God? A yaksha[2]? A magician?'
Reply: 'I am Myself. I am I. I am the primordial power that is inborn in every atom in this Creation made of five elements. From animals and birds up to the entire countless living creatures I also reside in them in their maternal and paternal forms. I am the preceptor of this total Creation.'

Question: 'Then, are you an incarnation of Lord Datta?'
Reply: 'Undoubtedly I am Datta. As you are having a body I also come with a body to enable you to recognise Me. In fact, I am formless, attributeless.'

Question: 'Then you have no form or attributes, isn't it?'
Reply: 'To have no form is also a form. To have no qualities is also a quality. I am the base for form and no form, for attributes and non-attributes and I am beyond them also.'

Question: 'If you are everything, why weal and woes to living beings?'
Reply: 'Myself and yourself are within you. Yourself residing within you is jīva[3] and Myself residing in you is Paramātma[4]. As long as you entertain the

1 Here: Līlas
2 A celestial person
3 The individual self or the soul
4 Super-self / super soul

notion of doership you cannot become Me. Till then you cannot come out of pairs of opposites like happiness and misery, sin and virtue. When the 'you' in yourself diminishes and 'I' in you ascends higher, then only you come closer to Me. As you come closer and closer to Me, your responsibility decreases. When you are under My care, you obtain happiness and well-being.'

Question: 'Some people say that jīvātma and Paramātma are different. Others are saying that jīvātma is very close to Paramātma. Some others maintain that jīva is God. Which of them is correct?'
Reply: 'There is no loss if both of us remain separate. Beneficial fortune would accrue when your arrogance is annihilated and both of us remain in a state of duality. You remain in a state of bliss, provided you realise that everything is earned on account of My grace and that you are only an instrumental phenomenon. Liquidation of moha[1] is liberation. Therefore, you can attain salvation even in a dual state. When you are in a very close proximity to Me, I will be revealing through you. When all My powers are revealed through you, when your arrogance is destroyed, the ignorant infatuation in you decreases. In this superior non-dualistic state, you achieve bliss. This is also liberation because it is devoid of infatuation. When your ego is totally erased, and your presumption of being the doer is completely burnt down, the 'I' in you fades out and only 'Me' remains in you. So, you will attain brahmānanda[2]. Therefore, you can achieve liberation even if you are in a non-dualistic state. The state of brahmānanda is all the same whether you are in a dualistic[3], non-dualistic[4], or distinguished dualistic[5] stage of spiritual progress. It cannot be captured by mind or word. It is only a matter of experience.'

Question: 'Some people who attained the position of avadhūtas[6] call themselves the supreme Brahman. Then, are You an avadhūta?'
Reply: 'No. I am not an avadhūta. I am the Superior Brahman. An ava-

1 Delusion
2 Profound bliss which cannot be comprehended by mind by any means
3 Sanskrit: Dwaita
4 Sanskrit: Adwaita
5 Sanskrit: Visishta Adwaita
6 Someone who is freed from all worldly bonds

dhūta experiences that everything is Brahman, but I am Brahman and My position is that I am everything.'

Question: 'I do not understand the secret in this small difference.'
Reply: 'An avadhūta who is freed from all worldly bonds merges in Me and experiences the state of supreme bliss. He has no individuality and when there is no individuality there is no will or resolve. I am in the great resolve for this Creation, and I am also in the supreme power. I am in the shape of the power of illusion called living creatures. If I order an avadhūta who merged in Me to take birth again, he should obey it. Mine is a form of truth, knowledge and bliss coupled with will power. Their form of truth, knowledge and bliss is devoid of willpower.'

Question: 'Fried seeds do not germinate, isn't it? After attaining the knowledge of Brahman Himself, how is it possible to be born again?'
Reply: 'It is the nature of Creation that fried seed will not sprout. However, the power and strength of the Creator lies in sprouting up fried seeds. In fact, My incarnation in the past took place to prove truth through these theories and counter-theories.'

Question: 'Lord Dattā, Srīpadā, kindly explain.'
Reply: 'My father, who crossed all triads like past, future and present — three states of existence: Creation, continuance and liquidation — became known as Sage Atri. My mother became well known as Anasuya because she was not having the slightest envy or hatred towards any creature or any matter. Sage Atri undertook a severe penance to visualise the param jyoti[1], which is the support for the Trinity and also beyond it. Mother Anasuya also did penance praying to that param jyoti to look at each living being and matter in the Creation with ambrosial glances and shower grace on them. Living beings experience weal and woe according to the principles of karma. Therefore, mother Anasuya prayed with the intent that the results of great sins should affect people slightly and the results of small virtuous acts should give bountiful results. Mother had transformed strong metal pieces in the shape of chickpeas into live eatable chickpeas by virtue of

1 The highest light

her spiritual power acquired through penance. Metal is the consciousness in complete dormant state. Trees and tree related substances are consciousness in a partial sleep state. Animals belong to the state of complete consciousness. The evolution of man takes place in the following manner: *at first, the being is born as mineral and then dies; afterwards, the being takes birth as trees and creepers; then takes birth as animals; and finally emerges as a human being. Such a human being should cultivate discrimination, wisdom and detachment and awaken the divine power dormant in him and strive to achieve liberation.*

"Mother had proved that the properties of the evolutionary process can be changed with the grace of the Almighty. The consciousness in the form of the Trinity was in an awakened state. Therefore, she changed it into a dormant state and transformed the three Godheads into the form of infants. The powers of the three Mothers became one and formed as Anaghā Devi[1]. I was born as Dattatreya and married Anaghā Devi. In the incarnation of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, I was born in the form of Ardha Narīswara[2] with Anaghā Devi on my left side and Dattatreya on My right side. This is a form of Lord Shiva combining half masculine and half feminine features. You must understand that the Lord who created this magnificent Creation, according to His free will, also has the strength and power to alter the principles of Creation when needed.'

Question: 'Srīpadā, You are capable of changing the principles and nature of Creation. Can You not remove my poverty?'
Reply: 'Certainly, I can remove your poverty, but I am postponing it to the next birth. Even in the next birth, I will grace only after you suffer poverty for a long time. Thotakura is a small thing. How much attachment did you develop on that! My mother, father or grandfather never asked anything from anyone. Being a small boy, how much food will I eat? When I wanted it, you should have given thotakura immediately. Now that time is over. To remove the dirt from your mind, this lifespan is not enough.

Every man gets a lifespan, wealth, beauty and fame as the fruit of his merit. As the result of sin, one gets a shortened lifespan, poverty, ugli-

1 The trinity of Lakshmi, Parvati and Saraswati
2 The male-female God

ness and ill fame. I took out a major portion of your merit and gave you some more life. Much of your merit was expended. Much sin remained. You will have to experience the poverty. As you worshipped the self-manifested Datta, I am gracing you that you will get enough food to eat twice in a day without suffering, even though you will have no wealth.'

Question: 'Srīpadā, scriptures enjoin that we should follow the caste system. Your grandfather decided that Vaishyas can have investiture of the holy thread under the Vedic system. Is it not wrong?'
Reply: 'Your tongue should be slit as you are finding fault with the decision of that Satya Rishīswara[1]. Who do you think is our grandfather? He is actually Bhaskarācharya[2]. The couple Vishnu Datta and Susīla were very sacred persons who did not know what selfishness was. I instructed the deities of time and action to make them My parents. The ancestors of Narasimha Varma were great devotees of Srī Lakshmi Narasimha Swamī. They were pious people who organised large scale food donations during the sacrifices and rituals in Simhachalam. Even before I was born in Pīthikapuram, I was planning in a systematic way. My relationship of indebtedness for those three families will not be over in one life. It will not end in one incarnation. My bountiful hand will benefit them for generations. They will live without any worry under the shade of My divine canopy.

The assurance of Srīpāda to His devotees

"As far as My matter was concerned, You could not give Me even the cheap thotakura. *If you offered Me meals, you could have earned merit equivalent to feeding one hundred thousand*[3] *Brahmins. You lost that great opportunity. You should consult the scriptures when a debate arises as to what is right*[4] *and what is wrong*[5]*. However, when a doubt arises whether the injunctions of the scriptures are to be implemented or not, the deci-*

1 Rishi of Truth, the upholder of Truth
2 The spiritual Guru of the Ārya Vaishya community in the Brihat Sila Kingdom
3 Here: Lakh: Indian numbering unit equaling one hundred thousand (100,000)
4 Here: Dharma
5 Here: Adharma

sion of pure-hearted people is to be regarded as an injunction of the scriptures. Whatever they say is Vedic truth and their word is acceptable to the tenets of righteousness. Even if they want to pronounce an unrighteous decree, the Goddess of Justice would not allow them to digress into an evil path and compel them to deliver a correct judgement.

"Scriptures say that it is sin to harm others. However, the battle that was fought in the presence of Lord Srī Krishna became known as a righteous battle; and the place where the battle between Kauravas and Pāndavas took place had become known as dharma kshetra[1]. The scriptures say that a religious ritual gives merit. However, when the supreme Lord Shiva was not invited, the ritual performed by Daksha ultimately led to a big war. The head of Daksha got cut, and the head of a goat was fixed for him. *When there is aggravation of bile, a physician would treat the patient with lemon and usiri*[2]. *When a part of the body becomes gangrenous, a physician would have to cut out that part. I am also the same. Not only gods but devils are also within Me. I behave like a lunatic, a ghost and also as a devil. Nevertheless, love towards all living beings would be overflowing within Me. My conduct would be in tune with your nature, the good and bad results of your actions. I will not leave the hands of devotees who rendered total surrender to Me. I will drag My devotees residing in distant lands even forcibly to My residence*[3]. *You should not discuss the origin of sages and rivers.* Has not the supreme power[4] taken birth as Kanyaka Parameswari in the Vaishya caste? There are accomplished siddhas in Vaishya sages. Not only for Brahmin, Kshatriya and Vaishya castes but low caste Shūdras also are eligible for Vedic upanayanam, if they observe spiritual discipline and regulations. The third eye should open up on the performance of upanayanam. The inner consciousness should get purified and the mind should concentrate on the knowledge of the Supreme.

"Your mind is completely absorbed in the knowledge of vegetables. Do you think that Brahman is a commodity to be procured in the market? *A Brahmin in this life may be born as a pariah in the next birth and a pariah*

1 Place of the Law
2 Amla (Phyllanthus emblica), also called Indian gooseberry or acid myrobalan
3 Here: Kshetra
4 Here: Sakthi

in this birth may be born as a Brahmin in the next birth. Please note that the Supreme Brahman transcends time and space, caste and religion. God likes inner feelings and not external appearances. God works according to your feeling. When matters relating to the knowledge of Brahman come up, I am a Brahmin. When holding court inquiring about the welfare of devotees and granting them favours, I am a Kshatriya. *For every living being a wage would be fixed according to his actions of virtue or sin. The wages of every person are with Me. When I weigh and measure for calculating what is due to every individual, I am a Vaishya. As I serve people by attracting unto My body the troubles and pains of My devotees, I am a Shūdra. When I wash out the sins of living creatures, I am a washerman. When I burn the dead ashes and grant them noble births, I am a keeper of burial ground.* Now, decide and tell Me to which caste I belong.'

Question: 'Srīpadā, excuse me. I am an ignorant one. You are Lord Datta Himself. You are the sole refuge for all living creatures. You kindly explain to me how Creation is formed.'

The description of several worlds

Reply: 'Grand pāpā, there are eighty-eight thousand sages in heaven, who are householders. They have the potential to take rebirth. They stand as seeds for propagating dharma again. From the undefinable power of the universal soul, a small fragment took the shape of Brahma for the Creation of the universe. Water that came out gradually from Paramātma spread out everywhere. From the vigour of the super-soul, many crores[1] of golden eggs were formed. This brahmāndam[2], in which we are living, is one among them. When the inside of the egg was filled with gloom, the brilliance of Parameswara[3] was personified and He became known with the name Aniruddha[4]. As He illuminated the egg with

1 Indian number; a crore corresponds to ten millions
2 Universe
3 The highest God
4 Sanskrit: uncontrolled, unrestrained; the undaunted active intelligence of consciousness; the centre of mind

its magnificent lustre, He was termed as Hiranyagarbha[1], Surya[2], Savita[3] and Paramjyoti[4] and many other names in the Vedas. Sage Bharadwaja conducted the sacrifice of Sāvitra Kāthaka Chayanam[5] during Treta Yuga[6] in Pīthikapuram. Sāvitra Kāthaka Chayanam was addressed to the great splendour of Dattatreya that envelops many millions of universes. In Satya Loka[7], there is an important place called Nirāmaya Sthan[8]. In three tier steps, deities of manes called Vasus, Rudras and Adityas reside. They act as the guardians of Nirāmaya Sthan.

"The Kārana Brahma Loka is the residential place of the four-faced Brahma. Srīnagaram, which is famously known as the Vidya Sthānam[9] and the Mūla Prakrithi Sthānam[10], is above it. Above that, Maha Kailas is there and the Kārana Vaikunta[11] is above that. Known as Purānapuram, it is the place of Vidya-dhara Sthan in Satya Loka. Sadhyas reside in Anjanāvatipura of Tapo Loka[12]. Sanaka, Sanandana[13] and other sages live in Ambāvatipura of Jana Loka. Siddha and other sages live in Jyotishmatipuram of Mahar Loka. Indra and other deities reside in Amarāvatipuram of Swarga Loka called as Suvar Loka. The celestial architect Viswakarma lives in Radhantarapuram of Bhuvar Loka, which houses stars and planets of the globe.

"Grand pāpā, there are two divisions in Bhū Loka[14]. The division inhabited by humans is called Bhū Gola. There is another one known as Maha Bhūmi. Maha Bhūmi is situated at the south of Bhū Gola at a distance of five crore brahmānda yojanas. Marthya Loka[15] means Bhū Loka and Bhuvar

1 The golden, self-effulgent Egg
2 The manifestation of light, the Sun
3 Savita or Savitru, the Central Sun
4 The Highest Light
5 A ritual to the Sun
6 The 2nd of the four yugas
7 The 7th and highest plane or world in the Vedic system, the world beyond Tapa Loka
8 A place where the people are free from disease
9 Place of Vidhyadharas, a special class of celestials
10 Centre of the elemental nature
11 The place of Vishnu
12 The world of the Devas
13 Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanat Kumara and Sanat Sujata are the four Kumaras or Sons of Brahma or of the Cosmic Mind.
14 The Earth
15 The region of the mortals

Loka. This includes Maha Bhūmi[1] also. Pātālam means Atala, Vitala, Sutala, Rasātala, Talātala, Mahātala, Pātāla[2]. Roughly, these are called Swarga, Marthya, Pātāla.

"Maha Bhūmi is situated below the Earth in where we live. It is in the form of a rising circular ground in the middle. Therefore, the illumination from the Sun and the Moon constantly light the surface of Maha Bhūmi. As there is always light there is no determination of time. On this great Earth, seven seas and seven islands exist. Jambudwīpa[3] is situated here only.

"In the beginning of Creation, everything was inundated with water. As Prajāpati[4] did penance for commencing Creation, a lotus leaf appeared on the water at that time. Prajāpati assumed the form of a wild boar and took a dip near the lotus leaf and reached the Maha Bhūmi. From that Maha Bhūmi He dug with its sharp tusks and separated some mud and brought that wet mud to the surface of the water. That mud was placed in the lotus leaf. Then it was named as Prithivi. Grand pāpā, this is called earth. The Earth is at a distance of five crore brahmānda yojanas[5] from Maha Bhūmi. Maha Bhūmi has an extent of fifty crore yojanas. Jambudwīpa, which is in Maha Bhūmi, has nine continents in it. Deities reside in Daiva Khanda. In Garbhasthya Khanda reside spirits; in Bharata Khanda reside human beings. In Saraka Khanda dwell siddhas; in Gandharva Khanda dwell gandharvas[6]; in Purusha Khanda dwell kinneras. Demons live in Tamra Khanda; yakshas live in Seru Khanda and pannagas live in Indu Khanda. Southwards to Jambudwīpa of Maha Bhūmi in Bharatpura of Bharat continent, Vaivasvata Manu[7] holds court along with sages of the earth and humans. Just as Jambudwīpa exists in Maha Bhūmi another Jambudwīpa exists on Earth.

"Even before I incarnated in Srī Pīthikapuram, the incarnation of Srīpāda Srīvallabha arrived on the Maha Bhūmi hundred years in advance. The Jambudwīpa on Maha Bhūmi is spread over an extent of hundred

1 A great tract of land; one Maha Bhūmi relates to Earth, the other to the outer world
2 The seven netherworlds; they exist in man below the tip of the spine
3 The White Island
4 A ruler on the cosmic plane; the God of the time cycles called patriarch in the Bible
5 One ordinary yojana is ten miles or sixteen kilometres
6 Heavenly musicians
7 The prototype of the heavenly man of this cycle living on earth

thousand[1] brahmānda yojanas. Vaivasvata Manu dwells in the Bharat[2] subcontinent of Jambudwīpa. Celestials reside in other continents. In Jambudwīpa of Maha Bhūmi, cold and heat would be moderate and pleasant. Mild rays of the Sun spread at all times, and there is no difference between day and night. Jambudwīpa in Maha Bhūmi spreads over one hundred thousand yojanas. The details of the extent of various seas and mountains etc. are as below:

Oceans[3] *and Islands*[4]	*Distance*
Lavana Ocean	100,000 Yojanas
Plaksha Island	200,000 Yojanas
Ikshu Ocean	200,000 Yojanas
Kusa Island	400,000 Yojanas
Sura Ocean	400,000 Yojanas
Krouncha Island	800,000 Yojanas
Sarpi Ocean	800,000 Yojanas
Sakha Continent	1,600,000 Yojanas
Dadhi Ocean	1,600,000 Yojanas
Salmalī Continent	3,200,000 Yojanas
Kshīra Ocean	3,200,000 Yojanas
Pushkara Continent	6,400,000 Yojanas
Pure Water Ocean	6,400,000 Yojanas
Chalāchala Mountain	12,800,000 Yojanas
Chakravala Mountain	25,600,000 Yojanas
Lokāloka Mountain	51,200,000 Yojanas
Tamo Bhūmi	125,000,000 Yojanas

“The rays of the Sun cannot go beyond the Lokāloka Mountain. Therefore, the area between the Lokāloka Mountain and the wall of the universe is always dark. The wall of the universe has a thickness of one crore yojanas. The Varāha and Narasimha incarnations[5] were not covering the entire Earth. Varāha does not mean ‘pig’. It means rhinoceros having one tusk.

1 Here: Lakh: Indian numbering unit equaling one hundred thousand (100,000)
2 Name for India
3 Here: Samudrams
4 Here: Dwīpas, also called continents
5 This refers to the incarnation of Vishnu as a boar (“pig”) and as Man-Lion (Narasimha)

The explanation of islands[1], the rulers of islands[2] and the gods responsible for the maintenance of the islands[3]

"Whereas Jambudwīpa[4] in Maha Bhūmi was ruled by Swayambhuva Manu[5] as the first emperor, his sons became kings for the other islands.

1. Medatidhi ruled Plaksha Dwīpa,
2. Vapushmanta ruled Salmama Dwīpa,
3. Jyotishmanta ruled Kusa Dwīpa,
4. Duthimanta ruled Krouncha Dwīpa,
5. Havya ruled Saka Dwīpa,
6. Savana ruled Pushkara Dwīpa as first emperors respectively.

1. In Plaksha Dwīpa Aryaka, Kurara, Vindaka and Bhavina are the four castes who reside. For them Vishnu in the shape of a moon is the deity.
2. In Salmali Dwīpa, Kapila Varna, Chakravāka Varna, Pita Varna and Krishna Varna are the four castes who reside. They are worshippers of Vishnu.
3. In Kusa Dwīpa, Dami, Sushmina, Sneha and Mandeha are the four castes who reside. For them Brahma is the deity of worship.
4. In Krouncha Dwīpa, Pushkara, Pushkala, Dhanya and Pishya are the four castes who reside. For them Rudra is the deity of worship.
5. In Saka Dwīpa, Manga, Magadha, Manasa, Manda are the four castes who reside. They worship the Sun God.
6. In Pushkara Dwīpa there are no castes. All are happy like celestials without suffering from any disease and sorrow. For them Brahma is the deity of worship.

"In Jambudwīpa of our Earth, Bharat Varsha, Kimpurusha Varsha, Hari Varsha, Ketumala Varsha, Ilavruta Varsha, Bhadraswa Varsha, Ramyaka Varsha, Hiranyaka Varsha and Kuru Varsha are there. Grand pāpā, just as Jambudwīpa with division of continents exists on Maha Bhūmi, another

1 Here: Dwīpas
2 Here: Dwīpa Adhipathis
3 Here: Dwīpa Devatas
4 The White Island
5 The first of the Manus

Jambudwīpa with bifurcation of regions exists in Earth's hemisphere. Maha Bhūmi is round with an elevated area in the middle like the shell of a tortoise. This is called Bhūmandala[1]. The globe of the earth is, however, like a lemon fruit. Maha Bhūmi encircles Meru Rekha and extends up to the wall of the brahmānda. The earth is exactly in the middle of the circle of illumination. Jambudwīpa lies encircling the line of Meru Mountain which is in the middle of the Maha Bhūmi. Seven seas and islands are situated around it. On the Earth the northern hemisphere is called the deva[2] part and the Southern hemisphere is called the asura[3] part. At the centre, which is the equidistant point of the Maha Bhūmi, is the Meru Mountain with a divine glow. It is the habitation of Manus who rule over the humans. Bhūgola is the place of humans who are under the rule of Manus. The wheel of illumination is placed on the top of the Chakravala Mountain which is situated around in the Maha Bhūmi. Bhūgola is, however, different from this. The glowing wheel of illumination encircled by the seven orbits rotates round once in a day. In Maha Bhūmi, cold, heat and other climatic changes are less. It is always day there, with no night and no difference in time. It is different in Bhūgola. Only on account of the results of righteous acts of merit, one can reach Maha Bhūmi. Bhūgola is the land of action[4] for earning punya. People with gross bodies have to live on Earth. In Maha Bhūmi small pralayas[5] do not take place, only the Manu pralayas[6] take place. In Bhūgola yuga pralayas[7], maha yuga pralayas[8] and Manu pralaya happen.

"Maha Bhūmi is called Dhatri and Vidhatri. Bhūgola is called Mahi, Urvi, Kshiti, Prithivi and Bhūmi. Grand pāpā, I am now going to tell you about netherworlds[9], listen. Ghosts live in Atala, guhyakās[10] live in Vitala, demons live in Sutala, and spirits abound live in Rasatala. Yakshas reside in Talatala, manes live in Mahatala and serpents live in Pātala.

1 Region of the Earth
2 The beings of Light
3 The beings of darkness
4 Karma Bhūmi
5 Deluges
6 Great apocalypses at the end of a Manvantara (world cycle)
7 Smaller apocalypses at the end of a Yuga (age)
8 Greater apocalypses at the end of a Yuga cycle.
9 Pātala Lokas
10 Celestial beings

Description of inhabitants of lokas, rulers of lokas and continents

"Kubera resides in Vitala. He is the Lord of nine treasures[1]. He is the treasurer for the brahmānda[2]. He is the ruler of the northern side. His capital is Alakapuri in Vitala. Māya lives in Yoginipura, which is on the western side of Meru in the same Vitala. He is the architect for demons. He constructed three townships, which can go high in the sky, for Tripurasuras.

"Yamadharma Raja[3] rules Vaivasvatapura in Sutala. He is the Lord of the southern side. A river of blazing flame is at the entrance of that town. This is called Vytarini[4]. People having merits[5] can cross this river easily, but it is very difficult for sinners.

"A demon Niruti rules Punyanagar in Rasatala. He is the Lord of the south-western side. Bhetala with hordes of devils dwells in Dhanishtapura in Talatala. The husband of Katyayani, Īsana, lives with all Bhūta Ganas in Kailasa of Mahatala. He is the ruler of northeast.

"Srīman Nārayana Murthy resides in Vaikunta Nagaram in Pātala. He is here with all his splendour. He lives with the spirits of Pātala, Vasuki and other superior serpents. He rests on the couch of Sesha Nāgu[6]. This is also called Karya Vaikunta situated in Swetadwīpa.

"In the last Pātala Loka, there are three tier segments. In the first segment, bodyless creatures live. In the second segment, groups of ghosts stay. In the third segment, creatures who take bodies of suffering remain immersed in great misery.

"Seven seas and seven islands are in Maha Bhūmi. In the middle of it Jambudwīpa is situated. That was divided into nine continents. The continent in the south is called Bharata Khanda. Swayambhuva Manu resides in Bharatpura of this continent. Many virtuous people and sages are under the rule of Manu. They administer the worlds and enforce principles of righteousness and unrighteousness. Surrounding the seven islands on Maha Bhūmi, mountains called Charachara, Chakravala, and Lokāloka rise up to

1 Here: Navanidhis
2 Universe
3 The Lord of Death
4 A river to be crossed in hell
5 Here: Punya
6 The serpent of time carrying all the beings of Creation

the Swarga Loka. These are layers which do not allow any light to penetrate through them.

"Below Maha Bhūmi seven netherworlds exist. They are called Sapta Patalas. Atala Loka is inhabited by devils. In Alakapuri of Vitala, Loka Kubera resides. In Yoginipura of Vitala, Loka Māya lives along with demons. In Sutala, emperor Bali lives with his demon servants. Yamadharma Raja lives in Vaivasvatapura. Sinners suffer their punishments in the various hells here. Punyapura in Rasatala is the seat of Niruti. Here, spirits and similar other categories exist. Bhetala resides in Dhanishtapura of Talatala. In Kailasapura of Talatala, Rudra dwells. Mahatala is the seat of manes and forefathers. Swetadwīpa Vaikunta is in Pātala. Narayana lives here. In the lower portion adjacent to Meru, bodiless creatures, souls of the dead and suffering bodies exist. In a place called Niralamba Sūchyāgrasthan, sinners of heinous crimes find a place. After meals, in the post water offering, water is offered to these people with chanting of the mantra:

'Rourave apunya nilaye padmarbhude nivāsinam
Ardhinam udakam dattam akshyyam upatisthate'

Names of lokas and description of their areas

"Please understand clearly that Bhūgola[1] and the Maha Bhūmi in Bhūloka are different. Surya Loka shines in Meru Rekha in the area that extends up to the upper Polar Star in the upper region above the central point of Bhūgola. This is the world where the Sun God[2] resides. This is not at all the vicinity of the Sun. In the same way, Chandra Loka, Angaraka Loka, Budha Loka, Guru Loka, Sukra Loka, Sanaychara Loka, the loka of the presiding deity of Rasis, the loka of deity of stars, the loka of Seven Sages, and the upper Dhruva Loka exist. Besides these there are many other lokas.

"Surya Loka is situated one hundred thousand[3] brahmānda yojanas from the central point of earth. This is the world where the presiding

1 The globe
2 Here: Suryadeva
3 Here: Lakh: Indian numbering unit equaling one hundred thousand (100,000)

deity Sun God lives. The following lokas are situated at distances from the central point of the Earth as shown below:

Lokas	Distance
Chandra Loka	200,000 Brahmānda Yojanas
Angaraka Loka	300,000 Brahmānda Yojanas
Budha Loka	500,000 Brahmānda Yojanas
Guru Loka	700,000 Brahmānda Yojanas
Sukra Loka	900,000 Brahmānda Yojanas
Sani Loka	1,100,000 Brahmānda Yojanas
Loka of Presiding Deity of Rasis	1,200,000 Brahmānda Yojanas
Loka of Deity of Stars	1,300,000 Brahmānda Yojanas
Loka of the Seven Rishis	1,400,000 Brahmānda Yojanas
Dhruva Loka	1,500,000 Brahmānda Yojanas

"In the same manner, Swarga Loka, Mahar Loka, Jana Loka, Tapo Loka and Satya Loka are situated at various distances from the central point of the Earth. The distance between the central point of the Earth and the wall encircling the brahmānda[1] is 240,500,000 brahmānda yojanas. The distance between the central point of the Earth and the outer wall encircling the brahmānda is 250,500,000 brahmānda yojanas. Bhūloka, Bhuvarloka and Suvarloka are destroyed during the time of pralaya. Maharloka above Suvarloka is partly destroyed and partly remains. Janaloka, Tapoloka, and Satyaloka are not destroyed till the life of Brahma expires. Swarga comprises of Suvarloka, Maharloka, Janaloka, Tapoloka, Satyaloka and the area up to the wall encircling the brahmānda.

Who is Datta?

"Grandfather Narasāvadhāni, to experience the philosophy of Datta you will require some lakhs of births. *Know that Datta is the only one magnificent brilliant illumination that spreads over countless millions of brahmāndas*[2] *and transcends them. Know that the same Lord Datta is actually before you as Srīpāda Srīvallabha.'*

1 Here: Anda Bhitti
2 Universes

"On hearing the kind teaching of Srī Charana, Narasāvadhāni and his wife were astonished. As the young infant boy aged just one year expatiated so many profound things with authority and as He proclaimed that He is verily Lord Datta Himself, Narasāvadhāni and his wife began to sob. They wanted at least to touch His auspicious feet. Srīvallabha refused it. Narasāvadhāni and his wife could not move even slightly from the places where they were sitting.

"Srīpāda averred, *'I am Datta. I am the sole phenomenon that pervades millions and millions of universes. Directions are My dress. I am Digambara*[1]*. Whoever chants 'Datta Digambarā! Srīpādavallabha Digambarā! Narasimha Saraswati Digambarā!' with purity of mind, speech and body, I stay there in subtle form.* My maternal grandfather Srī Bāpanāryulu is providing free boarding and lodging facilities to those who visit Pādagaya kshetra[2] from other places for performing rituals to their manes. You ridiculed such a great person saying, 'Where is your Swayambhū-Datta[3]? Has he not disappeared?' I am that Datta. *Whoever stays in that sacred house of My birth will surely turn sacred. Their ancestors will get Punya Lokas*[4]*. I am the Lord who has to look to the welfare not only of living beings but also of dead ones. Both birth and death are equal to Me.* Nevertheless, you are worrying. 'Is this the result of adoring Swayambhū-Datta?' Swayambhū-Datta will appear shortly to remove the slander against you. The consecration ceremony will also take place. I am granting you a greater life span. Remain in the meditation of Datta. I am assuring you that I will show mercy on you in your next birth. In this birth, you do not have enough merit to enable you to touch My feet. I, who created, protected and liquidated millions and millions of brahmāndas and the sole monarch of all this Creation, bless you with My propitious hand.' With a great terrible sound, the atoms in the body of Srīpāda disintegrated and Srīpāda disappeared.

"My dear Shankar Bhatt, Srīpāda had explained the mystery in chanting His name by adding Digambarā at the end of the name. His is the nature of omnipresence. It is beyond our comprehension how the formless nature takes shape and incarnates. Where is the end to the sportive plays

1 Wearing no clothes
2 Pithapuram, as the place where the feet of the asura (demon) Gaya fell
3 Self-born form of Lord Dattatreya
4 Worlds of merit

from His childhood of that Lord of the universe and who wore a cunning disguise?"

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 8

Description of Incarnations of Datta

People who aspire for Brahma jnāna are Brahmins

Next day, after finishing the daily worship, Tirumala Das began to narrate, "My dear Shankar Bhatt, when the revelation of the soul takes place, the sixteen potencies merge with their respective elements. The powers of various deities enter into their basic origin of consciousness. The knowledge of self and all actions get absorbed in the form of Brahman. Whoever yearns for such *brahmajnāna*[1] is really a Brahmin. Life, faith, sky, air, fire, water, earth, organs of the body, mind, food, water, thought, mantras, actions, worlds, and the different kinds of names in this world are called the sixteen potencies. Srīpāda Srīvallabha is a comprehensive incarnation of Parabrahma endowed with all sixteen potencies[2].

Food becomes mind; by sāttwic food mind purification takes place

"Brahma created life at first. Life is the totality of life in the universe. This is called the subtle soul and Hiranyagarbha[3]. The Creator also has the name Hiranyagarbha. The urge or drive for Creation in the physical, mental and intellectual facets of man is named prāna[4]. The prānamaya kosha body[5] is called shakti sarira[6]. The physical troubles can be removed by correcting the life consciousness. Before a man's physical body becomes ill, the layer of life force gets ill. The gross body becomes ill only afterwards.

1 Knowledge of Paramātma, the highest Self
2 Here: Shodasa kala
3 The golden, self-effulgent egg
4 Life force
5 Sheath of life force; vital body including the astral, desire and lower mental
6 Body of strength

It is only after the life forces are steady that the five elements are formed. The five organs are created to perceive the attributes of the five elements. The mind is formed to coordinate these organs and to oversee that all functions take place at the same time. Human beings should observe adequate precautions in the matter of food. The mind is formed out of the infinitesimal components of food. If the mind is strengthened by food, thoughts abound. When this stream of thoughts is regulated and controlled, such reflection of the thoughts' flow is termed as mantra. When sacrifices and other rituals are conducted as ordained by scriptures, and when mantras are chanted systematically, such process is called karma. The construction of the world was done according to karmas. The world cannot exist without a name and form. In this way, the shackle with links of profound misery is formed with sixteen colours. *In human anatomy, each organ is influenced by a particular deity. When the soul reveals to the yogi in deep meditation, the sixteen potencies merge in their respective elements.* The powers in the physical organs of the yogi get mixed in the elements in the innermost recess of the universe. Human beings with organs of action and organs of knowledge cannot remain without action.

Liberation cannot be achieved unless the ego is destroyed

"Actions are performed only based on the prompts coming from the ego of man. Aham[1] is the glow of consciousness regulated by the stipulations of the mind and intellect. For the yogi who had the vision of the soul[2], the fruits of actions done in the previous lives will get totally annulled. Unless the separatist tendency of the ego is completely destroyed, the vision of the soul will not take place. When the yogi has the vision of ātma[3], scriptural rituals and their rewards, as well as the ego centre and its illusory tricks, merge in the eternal Paramātma[4]. The yogi will merge with Paramātma and will lose his individuality. Paramātma has individuality and is a

1 The ego
2 Here: ātma sākshātkāra
3 The self, the soul
4 Super-self / super soul

personification of the shakti[1]. With the destruction of karma and its results, the yogi will attain siddha avastha[2]. Even when his gross body is experiencing the effects of karma, if he has no awareness of the physical body, then he will remain in a liberated state. *God may sometimes reveal His divine play through a perfect yogi. If the yogi mistakes that the strength and efficacy belong to him, then Paramātma would withdraw them and destroy his pride. If the yogi has to become an instrument in the hands of Paramātma, his egoistic arrogance must be liquidated in the Super Soul.*

"Srī Bāpanārya had transmitted power from the solar region into the Srī Mallikarjuna linga in SrīShaila[3], Mahābaleswara linga[4] in Gokarna[5] and to other holy places. Transmission of power also took place into the idol of worship of the self-manifested Datta. This power related to the fire has to be pacified. Otherwise, the priest and all the worshippers will be punished due to the terrible power of the idol of worship, and undesirable results will follow. Only yogis who have occult knowledge can understand that the power from the solar region descended into self-manifested Datta. The transmission of power in SrīShaila took place under the direction of Srī Bāpanārya in the presence of thousands of people. A brilliant illumination released from the region of the Sun merged in the Mallikārjuna linga, and all the people who were present there witnessed the spectacle. There is an important secret divine mystery in the transfer of power and the actual incarnation of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. That is a matter to be divulged to or to be known only by great sages. In SrīShaila, a great sacrifice of propitiation was conducted. As food was offered to thousands of people, the fire of hunger was assuaged on a mass scale. When shakti sheds its ferocity and remains in a tranquil state, all auspicious events happen in that placid state.

"However, there were no visible indications in Pithapuram that shaktipāta[6] took place into Srī Swayambhū Datta[7]. Therefore, no propitiatory

1 Power
2 A state of perfection
3 Srī Bāpanārya had channelled the energy of the Sun with a special ritual into a Shiva linga at Srisailam called Srī Saila Mallikarjuna lingam making it a powerful deity in that area.
4 Lingam in a town in Maharashtra, where the Krishna-River has its source
5 Tempel city in Karnataka
6 Transference of the energy of the Sun
7 Self-manifested form of Lord Dattatreya

rituals were conducted. Even when Srī Bāpanārya suggested that massive food offering should be held and that other procedures of pacification should take place, the local pandits rejected the proposal with their ill-conceived arguments.

Srīpāda is the embodiment of all sixteen potencies

"Time was passing by. Srīpāda entered into His second year of age. Through His many sportive miracles, He was proclaiming that His was the glorious incarnation of the eons endowed with all the sixteen splendiferous faculties. He left Pithapuram when He was sixteen years old. Afterwards, He moved for about fourteen years in Kuruvapuram and other places, but His age remained constant as sixteen years.

The names of Dattatreya's sixteen incarnations

"There is another significance to the number sixteen. Srī Dattatreya Swamī revealed Himself in sixteen forms in ancient times. Those forms are:

1. Yogi Raja[1];
2. Atrivarada;
3. Digambara Avadhūta Srī Dattatreya;
4. Kālāgni Shamana[2];
5. Yogijana Vallabha;
6. Līla Viswambhara;
7. Siddha Raja[3];
8. Jnāna Sagara;
9. Vishwambhara Avadhūta;
10. Māya Muktha Avadhūta;
11. Ādi Guru[4];
12. Samaskārahīna Shiva Swarūpa;

1 Ruler of the yogis
2 One of the sixteen avatars of Lord Dattatreya, as the fire of time
3 Ruler of the siddhas
4 The first guru

13. Deva Deva[1];
14. Digambara[2];
15. Datta Avadhūta;
16. Shyāma Kamala Lochana.

1. Yogi Raja: Yogi Raja incarnated when Atri and Anasuya did penance at Himadri for the purpose of having children. His first dārshan to Atri and Anasuya was on a full moon day, which was a Wednesday, with Krittika star, in the month of Kartika[3] and when the Sun was rising. Swamī was like an immaculate gem, passive at the time of this manifestation.
2. Atri Varada: Atri Maharshi was in the state of samadhi for one hundred years while having dārshan of this form. Due to the intensity of the penance, the three lokas were disturbed. To calm down that, Dattatreya gave the divine dārshan with six hands to Atri, in guru hora[4], in the early hours on one padhyami[5] of the second half of the month Kartika, which was a Thursday with star Rohini, and granted him boons. This manifestation is called Atrivarada.
3. Digambara Avadhūta Srī Dattatreya: Atri prayed the Lord who came in the form Atrivarada, 'Please grant me a son like You.' Swamī said, 'There is none equal to Me. Therefore, I am donating Myself to you.' He gave dārshan as an infant in Digambara form. It was on a Friday in the star Mrigasira, the time of sunrise and the second day of the second half of the month of Kartika. This manifestation is called Digambara Avadhūta Srī Dattatreya.
4. Kālāgni Shamana: This Digambara Avadhūta Datta form was seen both by Atri and Anasuya. In the month of Mrigasira, on a full moon day, which was a Wednesday, an exceedingly intense light emanated from His eyes and entered the womb of Mother Anasuya. After enter-

1 The Deva of the Devas
2 Wearing no clothes
3 Month of the Indian calendar corresponding with the months of October/November in the Gregorian calendar
4 Hora is the division of the day according to the planet that is influential at that time. A day has 24 horas, each owned by a planet. On Thursday (the day of guru), which is ruled by Jupiter, the first hour is influenced by Jupiter and so on.
5 First day

ing the womb, its intensity reduced. That highest light[1] changed into a male fetus. This is named as Kālāgni Shamana Datta. My dear Shankar Bhatt, it is this Kālāgni Shamana Datta that is being worshipped in the house of Appalaraja Sarma from many generations.

The time of Srī Datta's incarnation and the time of Srīpāda Srīvallabha's incarnation

5. Yogijana Vallabha: Kālāgni Shamana, who is our swami, was born as a playful infant on the evening of one full moon day, at the time of sunset, in the month of Margasira[2], on a Thursday and in the star Mrigasira[3]. That form is called 'Yogijana Vallabha'. My dear, in this Kali Yuga, for the first time, Srīpāda Srīvallabha was born at the time of sunrise on an auspicious day of Ganesh Chaturdhi[4] with Tula[5] rāsi[6], constellation Chitra and Leo ascendant[7], in Pitakapuram, as the son of the great meritorious mother Sumatī.
6. Līla Viswambhara: Many great munis requested our swamī who manifested as Yogijana Vallabha to initiate them into the yoga path. To test them, swamī created an illusory girl. Playing with her, He dipped into a river and disappeared. This is called Līla Viswambhara avatar. This līla[8] happened on a Wednesday morning on the full moon day of the month of Pushya[9]. My dear, that illusory girl was none other than Anagha Mātha who is the 'other half'[10] of Dattatreya. That divine auspicious form is in the left half of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. In the right half is Srī Dattatreya. So Srīpāda Srīvallabha form is in the form of Ardhanarīswara[11]. This is a divine secret.

1 Here: Paramjyoti
2 Sagittarius
3 Nakshatra constellation in the month of Taurus-Gemini
4 A festival in honour of Lord Ganesha, celebrated the 4th ascending moon phase in Virgo
5 Libra
6 Rāsi: The sign of the moon at the point of birth
7 Here: Simha lagna
8 Sportive play
9 A lunar mansion (Nakshatra) of the Hindu zodiac
10 Here: Arthānga Lakshmi
11 The male-female God

Srī Datta's other manifestations

7. Siddha Raju: Our Lord lived in Badarikashram[1] for some time. There siddhas tried to test Srī Swamī. Then, Srī Swamī deprived them of all their powers. When they surrendered, He granted atma siddhi[2] to them. This happened on a Thursday afternoon on one full moon day in the month of Māgha[3], in Maghā star[4]. *This form which granted atma siddhi to siddha munis is called Siddha Raju.* My dear, exactly 2,498 years before He manifested as Srīpāda Srīvallabha on a Ganesh Chaturdhi, one strange thing happened. Great yogis, who were in various higher spiritual states, did intense penance in Badarikashram and prayed for the dārshan of Lord Datta. Then the Lord gave them dārshan as a twenty-five-year-old young form. He taught them kriya yoga, which was very ancient and which accelerated the progress of the transformation of souls[5]. The mental consciousness[6], which in a natural course of transformation takes 10,000 years to reach the wholesome state, will achieve it in a few years because of kriya yoga. The great power in the highest dynamic planes will be attracted into the consciousness of earth, water, air, fire and sky and in accordance with the will of Maha Shakti, the gross bodies in the lower planes will be transformed. This is called kriya yoga. This is the most secretive type of yoga of Srī Dattatreya. With this, the molecules in the body will get charged with oxygen. The carbon in the body will be removed. This is the royal path to defeat death and become Mrityunjaya[7]. They called that form of the highest Teacher[8] who taught Rajayoga as Srī Babaji. It was Srī Babaji only who appeared as chandāla[9] to Adi Shankara and taught him knowledge[10]. He is still present in the physical body.

1 Badrinath; a holy place in the state Uttarakhand in India and an important pilgrimage centre
2 Perfection, attainment of Self
3 The 11th month of the Hindu calendar, from 21 January to 19 February (Aquarius)
4 Name of the 10th Nakshatra constellation (lunar mansion)
5 Here: Jīvas
6 Here: Chaitanyam
7 Conqueror of death
8 Here: Parama Guru
9 Outcast or untouchable, outside the Hindu caste system
10 Here: Jnāna

"The yogis forgot to ask Srī Dattatreya, who gave dārshan as Babaji, to take birth on earth. They regretted that. All those great yogis reached Kaivalya Shrunga Stha, which is between Nepal and Bhutan, and did intense penance. Among them, there were many yogis who were some hundreds of years old. They performed great penance. Hearing their prayers, the Lord gave dārshan. As a result of their prayers, an enormous light equal to 100,000 suns' light appeared in the sky. This enormous form took the shape of an old man. They called that great Lord as Srī Visweswara Maha Prabhu. They prayed Him to keep giving them dārshan at all times. Then the Lord said that He would give dārshan once in twelve years. They said that it was a long period. Then he said that he would give dārshan once in six years. They said it was also a long gap. Graceful at heart, He promised that he would give dārshan once every six months. Then those siddha groups asked Him to take birth as an avatar on Earth. Then Srī Visweswara Maha Prabhu promised that he would take birth as Srīpāda Srīvallabha in Pīthikapuram after 2498 years. He also promised that His partial manifestations[1] would come twelve times and the 12th avatar Srī Ramlal Maha Prabhu[2], would grant nirvikalpa samadhi[3] to a monk[4] by the name Vasudevananda Saraswati[5]. *Vasudevananda Saraswati will later identify Srī Bapanārya's house in Pīthikapuram where Srīpāda was born, but he will not be able to install pādukas*[6] *in that place, because that opportunity of installing pādukas will be given to someone else. My dear Shankar Bhatt, remember that the will of Srīpāda Srīvallabha is the only reason for work to happen, not to happen or to happen in a different way."*

I said, "Sir, Tirumala Das, the installation of pādukas is a small thing. To install the pādukas in the birthplace, is it required to wait for centuries?"

1 Amsa avatars
2 Born 1888 in Amritsar, Punjab; existed fifty-one years in his first body form (- 1939?) and continues to exist in his second body form in the Himalaya; venerated as a siddha yogi
3 Highest absorption in the Self
4 Here: Yati
5 1854 – 1914, also known as Tembe Swamī
6 Sandals worshipped as holy

Tirumala Das said, *"My dear, that is the play of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. Without His will, even a small leaf will not move*. In the Badri forests in Dronagni, which is also called Sanjīvini Mountain, he appears as a twenty-five-year-old person and is called by the name Babaji.

"In the Kaivalya Shrunga Mountains between Nepal and Bhutan, He is seen in an old form by the name Srī Visweswara Maha Prabhu. Now, He is giving dārshan as a sixteen-year-old child monk[1] in Kuruvapuram. He is in these three forms at the same time. Srī Kanyaka Parameswari, who is Adi Parashakti[2], is in a cave in Dasaswamedha ghatt[3] as Babaji's sister. My dear, Srīpāda's plays are unthinkable, they cannot be understood by arguments and are never seen or heard before. The Vaishya munis did great sacrifice[4] in Kasi under the direction of Maharshi Markandeya. Then Srī Kanyaka Parameswari gave dārshan in Dasaswamedha ghat and blessed them. That was a full moon day in the month of Ashāda[5]. Vedavyasa was also born on the Ashadha Purnima day. This purnima is called Guru Purnima. *Srī Dattatreya is the guru of all gurus and is the first teacher*[6].

8. Samskarahīna Siva Swarūpa: Parashurama[7] was doing a great sacrifice. On a Monday on the eighth day of the first half of the month of Sravana[8], Swamī sat under a Krishnamalaka tree[9] and taught His real essence of Shiva[10] to a muni by name Pingala nadha. This is called Siva swarūpa or samsakarahīna manifestation.
9. Deva Deva: Brahma once forgot the Vedas. On one Thursday on the fourteenth day of the month of Bhadrapada[11] in the Shatabhisha star[12],

1 Here: Child yati
2 Highest original power; also Paratatwam
3 A famous bank on the Ganges river in Varanasi, where people come to have a ritual bath
4 Here: Yagna
5 Month of the Hindu calendar corresponding to the month of Cancer
6 Here: Adi Guru
7 The 6th avatar of Vishnu
8 Nakshatra constellation in the month of Capricorn
9 A variety of the Emblica myrobalans (amla) tree producing fruits which are widely used in Ayurvedic medicine
10 Here: Siva tatwam
11 Nakshatra constellation in the months of Aquarius-Pisces
12 Nakshatra constellation in the month of Aquarius

he surrendered to Dattatreya and Swamī granted him the Vedas. This is called Deva Deva avatar.

10. Digambara Avatar: Swamī gave dārshan to king Yadu and told him about His twenty-four gurus and graced him. This is called Digambara avatar. This happened on a Wednesday on the full moon day in the month of Ashwayuja[1].
11. Datta Avadhūta: There was a good devotee called Gorakshaka. He is also called Gorakhnatha. Swamī manifested to him on a full moon day in the month of Jyeshta[2]. This form is called Datta Avadhūta avatar. The followers of Gorakshaka are in Nepal area. A copy of Srīpāda Srīvallabha's horoscope is there in Shukra Nadī Grandham[3]. In due course of time, it will come from Nepal to Srī Pīthikapuram. From then onwards, countless people will come to Srī Pīthikapuram for the dārshan of Datta pādukas.
12. Jnāna Sagara Avatar: My dear, after the avatar of Siddha Raju, Swamī entered into His wholesome jnāna yoga. This form which entered the jnana yogam in the early hours of Sunday on the tenth day of the first half of the month of Phalguna, is called Jnāna Sagar Avatar.
13. Viswambhara Avadhūta: The siddha munis, who took jnāna yogam from the Lord continued their spiritual discipline[4]. To test them, the Lord took the ugliest form. He showered wholesome grace on those yogis who surrendered to Him. This happened on a Tuesday on the full moon day in the month of Chaitram in Chitra star[5]. This is called Viswambhara Avadhūta Avatar.
14. Māya Mukta Avadhūta: There lived a good Brahmin in Kasi. On a Wednesday on the fourteenth day of the first half of the month of Vaisakha[6] in Svāti star[7], the ceremony of his ancestors was being performed. On that sacred holy ceremony day, a beggar wearing a loin-

1 Nakshatra constellation in the month of Aries (old name for Ashvini)
2 Nakshatra constellation in the month of Scorpio
3 A palm leaf manuscript detailing Nadi Astrology, where the life histories of future generations are recorded; Nadi palm leaves are generally named after their authors, here Shukra.
4 Here: Sadhana
5 Nakshatra constellation in the month of Aries
6 Nakshatra constellation in the month of Libra-Scorpio
7 Nakshatra constellation in the month of Libra

cloth entered that house with his dog and desecrated it. The Brahmin's anger crossed the limits. But the beggar made his dog chant the Veda mantras. The Brahmin recognised him as Dattaswami and fell on his feet. That was the same Brahmin who became a great devotee of Datta by the name Vishnu Datta in one birth[1]. Swamī was pleased and gave a boon that He would take the avatar of Srīpāda Srīvallabha; the merited couple would be born as Sumatī and Appla Raja Sarma; in their house they would worship Kalagni Shamana Datta Murthi and He would be born as their child. This form has the name Māya Mukta Avadhūta.

15. Adi Guru: The dual form of Datta Swamī and Anagha Lakshmi[2] that manifested to kill Jambhasura is called Adi Guru Avatar.
16. Shyama Kamala Lochana: On a Wednesday on the twelfth day of the first half of the month of Kartika[3] in Revati[4] star at the time of sunrise, Srī Lord Datta gave dārshan to countless people with the black lotus like eyes (Shyama Kamala Lochana), spreading the nectarine shower of divine light rays from His eyes. This manifestation is called Shyama Kamala Lochana.

"Lord Srī Datta grants happiness, enjoyment and liberation. To worship Him, it is enough to worship His divine pādukas[5]. The four Vedas assumed the form of four dogs and are licking His holy sandals. The Vedas absolve all impurities. When such Vedas themselves became dirty dogs and lie at His lotus feet, it is difficult for humans to understand His holiness. Even for the celestials and the Seven Sages it is impossible.

"During the time of the incarnation of Vamana, a sage by the name of Vamadeva Maharshi was living as His contemporary. During the time of birth, His head came out of the womb of His mother and at once retreated into the womb after seeing the surroundings outside. Then when deities and hermits prayed, He was born again. He was Brahma Jnāni[6] from the very birth.

1 Here: Janma
2 The trinity of Lakshmi, Parvati and Saraswati
3 Indian month beginning with the new moon of November or the beginning of the month of Scorpio
4 Nakshatra constellation in the month of Pisces
5 Sandals worshipped as holy
6 A person who has realised Brahman

"The same thing happened at the birth of Srīpāda also. As He was born twice, He is a dwija[1] from the very birth. He is someone who has the knowledge of the Highest Self[2] from the very birth. As He incarnated with complete, undivided and infinite non-dualistic sat chit *ānanda*[3], there was no preceptor for Him. *Srīpāda was born on Ganesh Chaturdhi*[4] *in Chitra star under Tula*[5] *rāsi*[6] *in Simha*[7] *lagna*[8]. *In reality, He is not the combined form of the Trinity, but a special phenomenon much beyond them. To indicate that He belongs to the fourth dimension transcending the Trinity, He took birth on Chaturdhi. Also suggesting that He is Ganesha, who is the Lord of Pravrithi Ganas and Nivrutti Ganas*[9]*, He took birth on Ganesh Chaturdhi.* Mars or Angaraka is the Lord of Chitra star. Angaraka is also called planet Mangala. If this planet is afflicted, many inauspicious events take place in the life of a person. Srīpāda was born in Chitra star to remove all ill effects and to grant all auspicious results. *Hence, if Srīpāda is worshipped during the tenure of Chitra star, one derives abundant beneficial results.* Srīpāda is actually Dharma Sāsta[10]. So, to make it known that He is the son of Hari and Hara, i.e., Srī Ayyappa Swamī[11], He was born in Tula rāsi. He was born in Simha lagna, the house of the Sun, the king of all planets. He is making it clear that He is the Lord of the universe. And that He is the emperor who came to hold His resplendent royal darbār[12]. *There are no niceties of dharma*[13] *unknown to Srīpāda. When a dilemma of dharma arises, the right path of righteousness would be visible when we worship Him.*

1 Twice born
2 A *Brahma jnāna sampanna,* with the knowledge of Paramātma
3 Fountain of being, consciousness and bliss
4 A festival in honour of Lord Ganesha, celebrated the 4th ascending moon phase in Virgo
5 The zodiac sign of Libra
6 The zodiac sign where the moon is present on the date of birth
7 The zodiac sign of Leo
8 Ascendant, the zodiac sign that is rising at the time of birth
9 The path, the material path and the spiritual path; Ganesha is the Lord of these forces (Ganas).
10 A divinity much worshipped in India; a son of Lord Shiva and Mohini
11 Ayyappa is Dharma Sāsta, born out of the union of Shiva and the female Mohini form of Vishnu
12 Court
13 Divine Law

"From Lord Srī Datta, the Trimurtis, and from them, the three crores[1] *of celestials and from those celestials thirty-three crores of deities emerged. Therefore, when the name of Datta is remembered, it results in the remembrance of all the thirty-three crore of deities.*

"For the Brahma face of Datta, Rīshipūja[2] *has to be done. For the Vishnu face of Datta, Srī Satyanarayana vrata and chanting of Vishnu Sahasranama*[3] *are to be conducted. For the Rudra face of Datta, Rudrābhisheka*[4] *is to be performed. As Saraswati resides on the tongue of Brahma, She resides on the Brahma face of Srī Datta. As Srī Maha Lakshmi dwells in the chest of Vishnu, She resides in the Vishnu face of Srī Datta. As Gauri Devi*[5] *occupies the left side of Shiva, She resides on the Shiva face of Srī Datta. As Srī Datta Himself is Srīpāda Srīvallabha, all goddesses and their powers are on the left side of the body of Srīpāda and all gods and their powers are on the right side of the body of Srīpāda.*

"Srī Venkateswara who manifested on the seven hills in Tirupathi is verily Lord Datta only. 'Vem' means sins. 'Kata' stands for cutter or one who drives out. 'Vem' is amruta bīja and 'kata' is iswarya bīja[6]. There, Venkateswara is the one who bestows divine ambrosia and affluence. He is also the one who drives out all sins. There is no difference between Srī Venkateswara and Srīpāda Srīvallabha. They are one and the same."

I asked, "Sir, Tirumala Das, our ancient elders enjoined that the regulations of caste system are to be strictly followed. However, I feel that Srīpāda is telling something different. Please remove my doubt."

1 Indian number; a crore corresponds to ten millions.
2 Worship as for a sage
3 A ritual worship to Lord Vishnu in the form of Satyanarayana; done to promote auspiciousness with reciting the Vishnu Sahasranama — the thousand names of Vishnu — and offering a tulsi leaf with each name
4 Water ritual
5 Name for Parvati
6 Explanation regarding the name of the deity of the Seven Hills, Venkateswara; 'Ven' means sins, 'Kata' means destroy. The one who destroys sins is 'Venkata'. The seed sounds 'Ven' and 'Kata' mean nectar and wealth.

The qualities of a Brahmin

Then Tirumala Das started telling like this, "My dear, a Brahmin should live to seek Brahma jnāna[1]. Then only he will be called a good Brahmin. One who abandons the ordained duties and follows bad ways becomes a bad Brahmin. When his bad ways exceed and he indulges in such acts as killing a cow and eating its flesh or coveting other women, it may be understood that he does not possess even an iota of Brahmanism. On account of an excessive bad conduct, the Brahmanic glow in him would be totally withdrawn. Even the life cells in his body undergo many changes and he finally becomes a Chandāla[2]. Then he becomes a Brahmin for name-sake. A Kshatriya with an intense desire for Brahma jnāna can attain Brahminhood through constant penance. Then the life cells in his body from birth get transformed into Brahmanic nature. Viswāmitra achieved Brahminhood in this way. *When Saturn travels through three zodiac houses during 7½ years, the life cells in the body of every individual undergo many changes. Old life cells die and new life cells are created. All this process goes on without the knowledge of man.*

The qualities of Kshatriya

"A Kshatriya who leaves his regular duty and engages in peaceful activities like agriculture, animal husbandry and trade, his military valour will not at all remain, if the peaceful occupations reach a zenith. His mind, attitude and body undergo many changes and he will become a Vaishya[3]. A Brahmin who follows the path of a soldier becomes a person like Parashurama. Have not Dronacharya and Krupacharya, though Brahmins by birth, adopted a knightly profession in ancient times? Have I not realised Brahman through the grace of Srīpāda even though I am a low caste Shūdra? A person who is born as Shūdra can become a Vaishya, or a Kshatriya, or a Brahmin through relentless endeavour. Yamadharma Raja[4] will not punish or spare anyone

1 Knowledge of Brahman
2 A Pariah
3 Merchant
4 The Lord of Death

simply because of the birth of a person in a particular caste. Rewards are awarded based upon the good and bad deeds of ours. I may be born as a Brahmin in the next birth even though I am a Shūdra by birth now. A Brahmin by birth now may take birth as a Shūdra in the following birth. Caste system is organised for some social regulations. Once Srīpāda said that the Almighty's face indicates Brahmanatwa; hands indicate Kshatriyatwa; thighs Vaishyatwa and feet Shūdratwa. Shankar Bhatt, you are accepting the hospitality in our house. The meals in our house are Brahmin meals only.

The secret of karma

"This surrounding area, which is constantly reverberating with the chanting of Srīpāda's name and is filled with thoughts about Him, is overflowing with auspicious and sacred vibrations. Narasāvadhāni is a Brahmin by birth, but all the material, mental and spiritual pulsations in his house are venomous. Therefore, Srīpāda rejected hospitality in that Brahmin's house which was filled with polluted airy atmosphere. This is the secret.

"Living beings should have some castes to take birth according to the principle of karma in the process of evolution or involution. This arrangement was made for that purpose. *John, a German national, was a seeker of Brahma jnāna. Because of his sincere efforts he had the good fortune of having the vision of Srīpāda in Kuruvapuram in the final stages of his spiritual evolution. He was blessed with the efficacious grace of Srīpāda even though He was an alien.* Though a resident of Pīthikapuram, Narasāvadhāni could not recognize Srīpāda as an incarnation for many years and though he recognized Him at a later stage, he could attain the grace of Srī Datta only after a great and arduous effort."

Then I asked, "Sir, you said that living cells undergo changes. Will each race have a soul of its own? What is the idea behind the statement that Pārvati Devi is the daughter of the Himalaya Mountain?"

Then Tirumala Das spoke thus, "Every race has a soul. It is a mental material, and it is a part that is released from the divine soul, Srī Datta. It has a great power which always has a direct connection with the divine soul. Race is not a collection of individuals born in it, as you mistakenly assume. In that collective individuality, the various strengths, efficiencies and attributes of

all the concerned individuals lie inside. *Just as living cells exist in the living individuals, in the same way each village, each town and each country have their own souls. The Earth in which we live also has a soul. We call that soul as Bhūmata*[1]. *It means that we call the deity favouring the Earth as Bhūmata.* Her soul is a great power which emanated from the supreme soul and is related to it. In the same manner, the patron deity of the Himalayan Mountain is named Himavantha. His daughter is Hymavati. When it is said that Yamadharma Raja[2] is the son of the Sun God, who is a witness of all things, the meaning is that He is the divine soul who delivers the verdict considering the good and bad deeds of living beings and punishes the sinners.

"It is only because of the energy derived from the Sun God, all the living beings are able to perform their actions. The Sun that is visible in the sky is different, and the divine soul that supports the Sun is different. I told you that Srīpāda would disappear when He is thirty years old. He will merge in every atom of countless millions of brahmāndas[3]. He is omnipresent. So, you may ask what is meant by merging again. Even though He is omnipresent, countless millions of greater universes are situated at some distance from His power and influence. To accelerate the evolutionary processes in them, He attracts them nearer to His power and influence. When a certain crisis develops in the evolutionary stages of the entire Creation, Srī Dattatreya incarnates in this fashion. Magnet attracts iron. When the iron has impurities, its ability to get attracted becomes very weak. This kind of avatār descends when it is intended to remove all impurities and attract every atom in the Creation towards Him and give a fresh direction to the evolution of the universe."

Explanation about five virgins[4]

I asked Tirumala Das, "It is said that uttering daily the names of Ahalya, Draupadi, Sita, Tāra and Mandodari destroys great sins. I am not able to understand this easily. Kindly explain me."

1 Mother Earth
2 The Lord of Death
3 Universes
4 Pancha Kanyas

Tirumala Das then said, "Devendra[1] had infatuation for Ahalya. He contrived a cunning scene to get her. One night, he assumed the form of a cock and crowed. Thinking that it was early morning dawn, Gautama went out to perform rituals. Devendra could not touch Ahalya because she was a chaste woman[2]. Devendra had divine powers. As he had divine powers, the strong will under the infatuation of Ahalya turned into a power which emerged into a woman resembling Ahalya. All the living cells in the body of the duplicate Ahalya were formed by the strong mind-power of Devendra. Gautama, who saw Indra indulging in sexual intercourse with the duplicate Ahalya, cursed them both. Then Ahalya exclaimed, "Oh foolish sage, what have you done?" Ahalya was spiritually in a higher position than Gautama. Due to the curse of Ahalya, Gautama's mind was disturbed for twelve years and regained normalcy after adoring Lord Shiva. The mental power of Ahalya became inert. With that, her body also became inert and turned into a rock. Ahalya was redeemed from the curse when the dust particles from the feet of Srī Rama fell on her. Therefore, understand that Ahalya was a pure soul.

"The cursed Devendra took birth as the five Pāndavas. Even though having five forms and five minds, the soul which was the support of them all was one. This is a strange thing. Sachi Devi manifested from the sacrificial fire as Draupadi. Her birth was not an ordinary birth.

"Also know that the God of Fire hid the real Sita inside him. Ravana took Māya-Sita to Lanka. When Sita entered into the fire, two Sitas came out. Therefore, know that Sita is a great devoted pativrata[3].

"There are twenty-seven stars in the twelve houses of the zodiac. The patron deity for the twenty-seven stars was born as Tāradevi. When she was in her full youth, the patron deity of planet Guru[4], Brihaspati, loved her and married her. An old husband cannot satisfy a young wife. This is a travesty of dharma. Violating the solemn pledges made during the marriage cannot be pardoned. When looking at Brihaspati, Tāradevi could not get the feeling of looking at the husband. The responsibility for evoking the feeling of a husband in her rests with Brihaspati. He who knew all

1 Indra
2 Pativratha
3 Chaste, virtuous and pious wife
4 Jupiter

dharmas behaved against dharma. In accordance with Tāradevi's mental feelings, the life cells in her body transformed in numerous ways. Her mind was filled with the form of Chandra[1]. Her heart was under the influence of Chandra. The Tāradevi who transformed like this was not the same Tāradevi that married Brihaspathi. So, the union of Tāra and Chandra was not against dharma. As per the regulations of Creation, Chandra has to go around all the twenty-seven stars. It is not the duty of the planet Jupiter. If Jupiter were to move like this, it would become a transgression of dharma. Anything which violates dharma is bound to be destroyed. Therefore, it is dharma that the patron deity of the twenty-seven stars, Tāradevi, joins the Moon, the patron deity of the Chandra mandala[2]. My dear, in consonance with this subtle dharma Tāradevi is a maha pativrata.

"When Bhishma was on his deathbed made of arrows, he taught Dharmaraja. Bhishma told, 'When bad things take place, they must be stopped, if possible. Otherwise, one should leave that place.' Hearing that, Draupadi laughed. Then Bhishma said, 'While Draupadi's clothes were being removed[3], I kept quiet. In those days, I was eating the food provided by Duryodhana and others. Thus, my attitude got spoiled. That bad blood had flown out of my body now. Now my nature has no impurity. The truth has dawned.'

"A living being takes many births in the process of evolution. It may be born as a female in some births, and as a male in some other births. It may also be born as an animal or a bird instead of a human. Mandodari was born as a male in one birth.

"In that life, he had a fickle-minded wife, a cruel wife and a gentle-natured wife. The fickle-minded wife was born as a monkey under the name Vali. The cruel wife took birth as Ravana and the gentle-natured wife was born as Vibhishana.[4] In a different kalpa[5], when Mandodari was born as a male, all the three were his wives. In the present birth, Mandodari became a wife to Vali and gave birth to Angada. Afterwards, she became the

1 Moon
2 The visible physical Moon as Earth's satellite along with all the invisible forces and deities in other planes of existence
3 This occurred in the royal court of Dhritarashtra; Duryodhana was the eldest of Dhritarashtra's hundred sons
4 Three characters of Ramayana
5 A combination of four yugas

wife of Ravana. After the death of Ravana, she became the royal wife of Vibhishana. The life cells at different stages when she was the wife of Vali, of Ravana and of Vibhishana were different and varied. Therefore, Mandodari is also a maha pativrata."

Then I asked, "Sir, it is said that women and men should observe monogamy. Is not polygamy reprehensible?"

The transformation of the cycle of karma

Then Tirumala Das said, "What you are telling is very true. If a person subjects his wife to harassment without any reason, he will become a young widow for seven subsequent births. If a man marries four or five females, he will be born as a female in the next birth. If the sexual desires and urges of those four or five females are not destroyed, they will take birth as males and have sexual indulgence with that female. If this happens all in one life, it becomes adultery, which is a sin. On the other hand, if those males marry her in different births separately, no sin arises. This is the power of the wheel of time. In this rotation of the great wheel many such countless wonders take place. If one takes the birth of a female, then the duties of that birth have to be followed. So is the case with males. A sinner who separates a couple would take birth as a eunuch. He would be impotent not belonging to any gender and would be deprived of marital bliss. He experiences utter misery and undergoes mental agony. Eating meat is prohibited. Suppose one killed a goat and ate it in the company of ten others, that goat experiences terrible pain at the time of the exit of life. Those painful reactions lie concealed in the airy region. My boy, painful reactions and happy reactions lie concealed in the sphere of air. *Good deeds produce happy vibrating reactions and bad deeds produce agitating reactions.* The dead goat intends to harm the ten persons who ate it. On account of its thought about humans, the goat will take the life of a man. These ten persons will be born as goats. In this way, the results of actions ensue. For every action, there would be a corresponding reaction. *Therefore, men should cultivate the quality of forgiveness.* A sātwic person would not like to eat the flesh of goat, even if he saw it. Even if the goat happened to be the man who ate it, if he forgives and grants it life, the wheel of karma stops.

"The collective virtue and the collective sin of the residents of Pīthikapuram fructified at once and became the cause for the birth of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. Pious people realised Him as Srī Datta and derived auspicious results. Sinners did not realise Him as Srī Datta and suffered ill effects. Those who abuse Srīpāda Srīvallabha fall into Raurava[1] *and other hells, even though they adore Srī Datta. It is better to be silent if the matter is not understood, but one should not abuse that beautiful, divine, glorious, auspicious and magnanimous form.* Those who offer camphor hārati[2] to His face but drive nails in His feet and those who abuse the incarnation of Srī Datta would have venereal diseases. Not only this, Srī Datta has added a peculiar yogic power in His sportive play of grace. *For pious people, the remembrance of the name of Srī Datta brings fulfilment of all their desires unasked for and without any effort. For those sinners who abuse Srīpāda, countless obstacles and undesirable things occur in strange ways. Srīpāda's is a form of fire. He wears a fabric of fire. His body is an embodiment of the holy fire of yoga. To describe the efficacy of His holy pādukas, even aeons are not sufficient. It is impossible even for the Vedas and Upanishads to describe the greatness of His pādukas.* Srī Datta is Srī Datta regardless of how many yugas elapsed, or how many kalpas passed, or how many cycles of Creation, sustenance and destruction took place. There is none comparable to Him. He is verily Srīpāda Srīvallabhā! Every atom in this Creation bears testimony to this supreme truth.

The reinstallation of self-manifested Datta

"A strange avadhūta came to Pīthikapuram. He was a mad monk. He was a peculiar ascetic who blessed people through curses and abuses. If he praised anyone, the fruits from virtuous deeds of the other person got diminished. The residents of Pīthikapuram enquired him about the whereabouts of the self-manifested Datta. Then that siddha informed them that the self-manifested Datta took a bath in all the holy centres and was resting in the river Ela. Then when a search was conducted in Ela River, the

1 The hell for humans who harm other living beings; the beings hurt by such a man take to the form of serpent-like beings and torture this person.

2 Waving of lighted camphor

statue of the self-manifested Datta came out. During an auspicious time, Apara Sarva-mangala Devi[1], Sumatī Maharani and Appalaraja Sarma, shining with Brahmanic brilliance, reconsecrated that icon. This was done according to the wish of that siddha. Srī Bāpanārya presided over the grand celebration.

Birth of Srī Vidyāranya

"Bāpanārya invited the siddha to their house for bhiksha[2] on the day when the reconsecration took place in the temple. The siddha agreed. He saw Srīpāda in the house of His grandfather. An overwhelming fatherly affection swelled in him on that divine child aged two years and who was treading softly on the floor. The child climbed onto the shoulders of His maternal uncle Venkavadhani. He was playing merrily with the tuft of hair on the head of His uncle. He saw the siddha and started laughing. Hearing that laughter, the siddha went into samadhi. When he recovered consciousness, Srīpāda said, 'Madhavā, Bukkarayadu will establish a Hindu kingdom as per your wish when I attain sixteen years of age. You will be with Hari Hara and Bukkaraya. May you become famous under the name of Vidyaranya Maharshi[3]. In the ensuing century, Govinda Dikshitulu will be born in the house of your brother Sāyanācharya. That Govinda Dikshitulu is none other than you. May you prosper as a rājarshi and a great minister of Tanjavur[4].'

"Then tears of joy showered from the eyes of the siddha. He embraced Srīpāda. Srīpāda paid obeisance to the feet of the siddha sportively. The siddha exclaimed, 'What is this wonder?' Then Srīpāda said, 'You will ascend Sringeri Pītham and become well known as Vidyāranya. You will then be born as Krishna Saraswati, as the third one in the lineage of your disciples. You will have a lot of fatherly affection towards Me. Therefore, when

1 Very auspicious and chaste married woman; title given in praise for the mother of Srīpāda

2 Donation of food or money

3 He was the 12th Jagadguru of the Sringeri Sharada Pītham from 1380 to 1386 A.D.; he is known as being the kingmaker, patron saint and high priest to Harihara Raya I and Bukka Raya I, the founders of the Vijayanagar Empire.

4 A temple city in the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu

I incarnate again as Narasimha Saraswati, you will initiate Me into the ascetic order as My preceptor, Srī Krishna Saraswati in Kasi. Kasi Visweswara and Annapūrna Māta are witnesses. You have to restore ascetic dharma.'

"The manner in which Vajapeyājula Mādhavācharya, belonging to Parāsara gotra, comprising of the sages Vasishta, Shakti and Parāsara, became famous as Vidyaranya Maharshi and some more things will be told tomorrow." Thus, Tirumala Das concluded the narration for that day.

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 9

The Discussion on the Fruits of Karma

That day was Thursday. It was sunrise time and the hour of planet Jupiter. Srī Tirumala Das and I were in a room in deep meditation. A fine ray of sunshine entered our room. When the sunshine entered our room, we returned to consciousness from meditation. Wonder of wonders! In those fine rays of Sun, both of us saw the form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha as a sixteen-year-old. Witnessing the most holy and utmost auspicious form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha as a lad of sixteen years is undoubtedly only on account of the generous grace of the great Lord. That splendid auspicious form gave dārshan to us for a second and then disappeared.

The chickpeas that we kept as an offering to the Lord turned into metallic pieces by the rays of the Sun. That was amazing as well as irksome. I was worried mentally whether the appearance of the Lord was a sign of His grace or whether the change of the chickpeas into metal pieces was a sign of His wrath.

Then Tirumala Das began to tell, "My dear Shankar Bhatt, this afternoon you can start for Kuruvapuram after accepting my hospitality. The permission of Lord Datta has been granted. Lord Datta seeks alms in places of Datta[1] during the midday hours on Thursdays. This time is a very auspicious time."

Then I said, "Sir, we have been spending time recollecting Srī Datta and with the narrations of the episodes of Srī Datta. It is painful that the chickpeas given as an offering turned into metallic pieces. Kindly remove my doubts and make me fulfilled."

Tirumala Das said, "My dear, after some centuries when Kali Yuga[2] advances, atheism will become rampant. The Lord, through various strange and astonishing miracles, will destroy atheism and will establish theism. He will thus bless living beings. In the incarnation of Srīpāda Srīvallabha,

1 Here: Datta kshetras
2 Dark age

Lord Datta will grant the seed form of the programmes for the establishment of dharma in the future.

"Consciousness in the metal lies in a dormant state. In the metallic stage, life exists only internally. Due to various chemical actions of the metals, life emerges. The mind exists in life as an inner ingredient. The consciousness in this early life form is in a semi-dormant state. You can clearly see this in the trees. A man who consumes narcotics experiences this state in his body. Nature, which expressed itself as this early form of life force, develops as part of the evolution and learns to function through the mind. This state can be seen in animals. An animal, after complete development, is called a man. In him, the mind works with its full strength. In this mind, a supra-mental mind transcending the ordinary mind also exists; it is beyond the mind. Man can become a perfect man through yoga. He can activate the kundalini force lying at the mūladhara centre[1] and take it to the sahasrara centre[2]. There, he can also achieve savikalpa[3] and nirvikalpa[4] states. He will experience himself as merged with Srī Guru, who is an embodiment of the Supreme Light. He will derive indescribable bliss in that state, and he will behave according to the wishes of the Higher Will[5]. Therefore, he will no longer have any bonds of karma. The shape of that Higher Will is, however, unthinkable, unimaginable; it has the ability to move with an extraordinary tremendous speed. The supra-mind belongs to the great Lord only. *Lord Srīpāda accepts millions of prayers every moment. He replies to every righteous prayer if it is bound by dharma. He remedies the troubles. He grants every just wish. If the speed of the mind of a man is the speed of a tortoise, the speed of the Lord's supra-mind exceeds comprehension and is tremendous. Even the speed of light cannot match the speed of His supra-mind. Any small prayer of a man or any living being reaches His countless rays of brilliance! He is the support for all visible and invisible forces. The lustre in His world is nothing but the cluster of brilliant rays emanating only from His ever-shining body. It has the brilliance of countless of millions of suns. Compared to His brilliance, the*

1 Base center
2 Head center
3 A state of samadhi in which one's consciousness temporarily merges with Brahman
4 Highest absorption in the Self
5 Here: Maha Samkalpa

combined brilliance of millions of stars and planets shining in millions of universes[1] *is like the light of a small candle torch before the Sun. My dear, this is the real and exact nature of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. That formless and attributeless Lord who has infinite strength, infinite knowledge and infinite permeation took to the human form as Srīpāda Srīvallabha because of His infinite grace on Creation. To understand this, man should become a complete siddha.*

The divine form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha

"Just as the evolution of man towards divinity is inevitable, God also comes down to lower stratas by condensing His infinite powers. This is called incarnation. This is a continuous yogic process. Once truth is established in Creation, it works naturally and effortlessly. Srīpāda Srīvallabha — a personification of the truth, knowledge and infinity — is a supreme divine incarnation who descended with an intention to establish several divine truths in Creation. He is really Lord Datta."

Then I said, "Sir, as I am carrying the conversation with you, many new things have been unravelled to me. The real nature of Srīpāda defies comprehension. I do not know how to write this divine magnificent biography of His; I do not know with what commentaries I should write it. You said about the establishment of the truth. I heard about the establishment of idols, but I did not hear about the establishment of the truth. Kindly explain."

Then Tirumala Das said, *"Dear Shankar Bhatt, you are the person intended to write the hagiography of the Lord. You write the experiences of the devotees of Srīpāda whom you come across. You just record the things they tell. Your commentaries are not necessary. Srī Vāru*[2] *Himself will get His biography written through you as a writing instrument. For you to think more than this is waste.*

"A man eats various types of food. They are assimilated on their own accord and they give strength to the man. In this procedure there is no intervention or involvement of the intelligence of man. The responsibility of man is limited to the acquisition of food. Afterwards, the duty of a healthy

1 Here: Brahmāndas
2 Srīpāda Srīvallabha

body is to internally cook it and to give strength to the body. *That means earning food is a duty imposed upon you. It is the duty of the body to assimilate the food eaten and to render strength. Since man has a mind, he enjoys more freedom and he can choose to do right or wrong. But the body has no such freedom. It must turn the food fit for assimilation and give strength to the body. That is a natural act done effortlessly regardless the likes or dislikes of the person who ate the food. It means that a duty was prescribed to the body. A truth relating to it was established. An act taking place based on the principle of truth goes on automatically without our effort or will.* Actions and reactions in this nature or Creation happen on the basis of truth. Sunrise, sunset, seasons and the course of the planets and stars take place like this. This is an inviolable law. Liberty was not given to them to act in any other way. The omnipresent Lord, having mercy on the living beings in this Creation, relaxes the duties prescribed by Him to some extent. In Krita Yuga[1], everything is achieved by mere will. In Treta Yuga, things are achieved by conducting sacrifices and rituals. In Dwāpara Yuga[2], they are achieved through the deployment of mantras and astras[3]. In Kali Yuga, tantra sāstra[4] has importance. In this yuga, results are achieved by using machines. According to this yuga's dharma things have been made easy. As the strength and intelligence of people are diminishing, easier ways to achieve things have been decided.

The vision of Srīpāda can be obtained by relentless meditation

"For those who continuously chant and meditate upon Srīpāda for three days and nights, Srīpāda will grant dārshan in flesh and blood and will bless them. *If a man follows one hundred thousand*[5] *ways for downfall, God adopts a million paths to uplift him. Lord Srī Datta carries on His administration of this Creation with His incarnations and through siddhas, yogis, avadhūtas and great siddhis.*

1 The first of the four ages, the Golden Age
2 The third of the four ages
3 Fiery missiles used in ancient warfare
4 Science for experiencing the concrete manifestation of divine energy through rituals
5 Here: Lakh: Indian numbering unit equaling one hundred thousand (100,000)

"There is a slight suspicion in your mind, as a small seed, whether Srīpāda is actually Srī Datta of ancient yugas. To remove this doubt, Srīpāda changed the offering of chickpeas into metal pieces. Mother Anasuya transformed metallic peas into eatable peas. He did this to remind us that He is none other than Srī Datta of yore. There is another secret meaning in this. The planet Jupiter is in a debilitated position in your horoscope. There is a relationship between the planet Jupiter and chickpeas. Srīpāda communicated to you through this incidence that difficulties due to the affliction of Jupiter are in a seed form and that He changed them into metal pieces which are incapable of sprouting anymore. Every article that enters this Creation is seen by Srīpāda through His divine mental horizon. This is the supreme truth. Knowledge relating to the truth is well established. Therefore, there is no loss even if all the people who had that knowledge disappeared from the world. When a person who is worthy of that knowledge steps into this Creation, that knowledge will come to him. Divine powers, long-lived sages and divine incarnations belong to the phenomenon of non-destruction. Human beings belong to the phenomenon of destruction. There is no stipulation that the phenomenon of non-destruction should confirm to a particular type of knowledge, position, strength or movement. Freedom is its nature. It is complete in all facets. It is most ancient and most modern too! *No action takes place without cause. Oneness is the basis for all causes and all actions. It is above all. It is the nature of Lord Datta. That Lord Datta incarnated for the first time in Kali Yuga with His all-splendid potencies as Srīpāda Srīvallabha in Pīthikapuram. It is impossible even for the thousand-hooded Ādi Sesha*[1] *to vividly describe such great Srīpāda Srīvallabha.*

"My dear, Srīpāda often proclaimed that He would incarnate as Srī Narasimha Saraswati. Hiranya Kasipa obtained very strange boons and it appeared as if his death was impossible. Even then, without infringing on any of the boons that were granted, the Lord took to the incarnation of Narasimha and killed Hiranya Kasipa in an exceedingly unimaginable manner.[2] The great devotee Prahlada was thus saved from Hiranya Kasipa. Prahlada averred that the Lord was in a pillar in a building. Accordingly,

1 The serpent of time carrying all the beings of Creation

2 Puranic story of the Narasimha avatar killing the demon Hiranya Kasipa and thus saving Prahlada

the Lord manifested from the pillar. *In Kali Yuga, many doubts abound as to whether God is there. Lord Srī Datta took to incarnation to suppress the arrogance of Hiranya Kasipa and to rescue devotees like Prahlada. The speciality of the Narasimha incarnation lies in proving the existence of God. Lord Srīpāda Srīvallabha and Srī Narasimha Saraswati are the two incarnations of Srī Datta who came into this universe with two important missions: to suppress the pride of those who abuse God and to protect the devotees, just like the eyelids protect the eyes. There is nothing that is not possible for Srīpāda."*

When Tirumala Das narrated in this manner, a doubt crept in my mind, 'I am now writing Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam on bhūrja patra[1]. On what type of material would people write this Charitāmrutam in the future? It is currently the time of the Salivahana calendar[2]. Srīpāda informed that the Christian calendar would gain prominence in the future. When did the niryāna[3] of Srī Krishna took place? On what date and at what time did Kali Yuga commence? I would believe that Srīpāda Srīvallabha is actually an incarnation of Datta if Srīpāda writes about all these things according to the calculations of time which would be adopted by people in the future on a leaf that would be used by them in the future.'

I did not disclose my above doubts to Tirumala Das. I put up postures as if I was listening to him. I smiled and looked towards the metallic peas now and then. Suddenly, the voice of Tirumala Das became hoarse. He lost the capacity to speak. While I was listening to the life history of Srīpāda, I heard a terrible deafening sound. After hearing the sound, I could not hear anything and became totally deaf.

Oh! Within a second, I became deaf and Tirumala Das became mute. Tirumala Das was trying to tell something, but no words were coming out from him. I could not hear even a small sound in spite of my efforts to hear. I then felt sorry in my mind that I got such a doubt, which I should not have entertained. As a result, I became deaf. Will it be a permanent disability? Oh God, what is to be done now?

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1 Bark leaves of Indian paper birch tree

2 Until modern dating techniques arrived, calendars were dictated by the royal rulers. The Salivahana calendar is probably named after a ruler in ancient India, Gautamiputra Satkarni.

3 The end of an exalted person such as an avatar

The offering of metallic peas formed into a sentence as Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadyae

In the meanwhile, the chickpeas, which were kept as an offering and which turned into metallic pieces, arranged themselves to a sentence 'Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadyae'[1] *in the Telugu language*. On them appeared a small white sheet. It became big as we saw it. It became rectangular in shape. It was thinner than the bhūrja patra. It was smooth when touched with the hands. Characters were being written on it in black colour in a beautiful way. They were written in the Telugu language to say, 'The demise of Srī Krishna took place during 3102 B.C., 18th day of February, during the night at 02 hours 27 minutes and 30 seconds. It happened in the year named Pramadi[2], in the month of Chaitra[3], Pādyami[4] of the first fortnight of the lunar month, Friday, and Ashwini star[5]; Kali entered after the niryāna of Srī Krishna.'

I was perspiring profusely. All the water in my body was coming out as sweat. My body was shaking violently. I was certain that Srīpāda was invisibly present there. I thought to myself, 'What a misfortune! It is now only a dream that I will ever be able to reach Kuruvapuram. I need not be surprised even if Srīpāda assumes the form of Narasimha and slays me. What can I do if He orders Tirumala Das to wash me and dry me as he does with clothes? If the Lord orders it, Tirumala Das would certainly beat me on the washing rock and would hang me for drying after the wash.' Some gurus who boast themselves as wise men endowed with self-knowledge, as they teach the concepts relating to Brahman[6] to their disciples, also shower them with a plethora of praises with an eye on milking money from them. The disciple also conducts himself with haughtiness, proclaiming that he was praised by that particular guru. This sort of gurus and disciples are both blameworthy! It was indeed a hilarious play of Srīpāda that Tirumala Das, who was born in a washerman caste, was imparting Brahma jnāna to me, who was born in a Brahmin caste. Those living in the vicinity were to-

1 May Lord Srīpāda protect us!
2 The 13th year in the Hindu calendar of sixty years (Samvatsaras)
3 Nakshatra constellation in the month of Aries
4 The first moon phase after full moon or new moon, also called Prathama
5 Nakshatra constellation in the month of Aries
6 Here: Brahma jnāna

tally engaged in their profession as washermen. They were neither discussing such philosophical things nor could they comprehend them. Whatsoever, Srīpāda Srīvallabha was my sole refuge.

I looked at Tirumala Das. His face was placid and shining with the lustre of the supreme. Then it occurred to my mind that Tirumala Das was a Brahmin and I, with a sullied mind, was a washerman.

The offering of peas that turned into metal pieces gradually returned to their original shape. I understood that Srīpāda pardoned me. After some time, that white sheet disappeared. Tirumala Das said, "My dear Shankar Bhatt, this Kali Yuga[1] is an age of metals. This age is an admixture of impurities. In compliance with the command of Srīpāda, I have to take birth again in Maharashtra after staying for some time in Hiranya Loka[2] following my death."

I said, "Sir, did Srīpāda order you to take another birth after leaving this body? Please tell me that story and make me blessed."

Tirumala Das said, "I once took washed clothes to the house of Srīpāda's maternal grandfather. *Then, Srīdharāvadhāni, uncle of Sumatī Maharani was carrying Srīpāda and making Him play and was singing 'Datta Digambarā*[3]*! Datta Digambarā! Datta Digambara Avadhūtā!'* Srīpāda was a boy of two years at that time. Srīpāda was crying with joy and playing. That spectacle was very charming to behold. Then I uttered, 'Srīpāda Srīvallabha Datta Digambarā!' Srīdharāvadhāni looked towards me. *Then Srīpāda said, 'Narasimha Saraswati Datta Digambarā!' Thus, Srīpāda taught in His own style that He Himself was Srī Datta in the past; that He was in the image with the name of Srīpāda Srīvallabha at that time; and when that image fades out He would make His appearance as Narasimha Saraswati.*

Samartha Sadguru to incarnate as Shirdi Sai Baba

"Srīpāda said, 'Grandfather, I want to incarnate as Narasimha Saraswati in Maharashtra. I am asking Tirumala Das to also come to Maharashtra.' Srīdharāvadhāni was dumbfounded. Then I said, 'Swamī, it is Your respon-

1 Dark age
2 Literally: 'Illumined astral planet'; can be translated as astral plane
3 Wearing no clothes

sibility to kindly take care of me in any place, in any form, and in any birth. I have a special liking for Your Bala Krishna form.' *Srīpāda then blessed me saying, 'Tirumala Das, you would be born in Maharashtra under the name Gadge Maharaj in the washerman caste. You will become virtuous in the service of distressed, oppressed and miserable people. My Samartha Sadguru incarnation as Sai Baba in the garb of a Muslim will take place in the Dhīsila*[1] *town. You would certainly obtain My grace in that incarnation of Samartha Sadguru Sainādh.* You have fondness for the image of Bala Krishna. So, you chant the name of "Gopalā, Gopalā, Devaki Nandan Gopalā!" I will always grant you My dārshan in your mental eye. After the fall of this present body, you stay in Hiranya Loka for some time and afterwards work for the welfare of the world as Gadge Maharaj. This is My boon for you! This is My assurance!'

"Srīdharāvadhāni returned to a normal state after sometime. All this was perplexing to him. In the meantime, Sumatī Maharani called her uncle. As illusion completely enveloped him, he again thought Srīpāda to be a common boy."

Then I said, "Sir, I have a doubt. Srī Krishna said in Bhagavad Gīta that the fruits of actions are unavoidable. How would Srīpāda destroy karma without violating the principles mentioned therein?"

The result of donations and philanthropic acts offered to sadgurus, righteous people and yogis

Tirumala Das replied, "Srī Krishna said that one should experience the results of actions, but He did not specify that they should be experienced only in wakeful state. They can be experienced even in the dreaming state. *A karma which has to be suffered physically with the body for ten years can be undergone through mental anguish or mental torture in dreams within few hours. The impact of karma can be erased in that manner. Offering services and donations to righteous people and yogis as well as offering services to deities also results in diminishing sinful acts. The images of deities are holy. When we render services to them, our sin would*

1 Today: Shirdi

be attached to them and their virtue would be transferred to us. When we offer donations to pious people and serve them, then also this sort of transfer takes place. When we meditate upon a sadguru, this kind of exchange occurs through the medium of meditation. A sadguru accepts services from his disciple, and through the medium of those services he takes the sinful acts of his disciple and bestows fruits of his penance to them. Someone should suffer the results of the sinful acts. However, as deities and divine incarnations are of tremendous brilliance and are personifications of the blazing fire, they can burn the sinful karmas accepted by them into ashes. Even if we offer a leaf, a fruit, or a flower to them with sincerity, such transfers take place mutually between our sinful karmas and their merits[1]*. The process of transfer would be directly in proportion to the intensity of our prayer, devotion and the level of surrender. Sometimes Srīpāda transfers the sinful karmas of His dependents to inanimate objects like rocks and stones. By knocking those stones and rocks and through various strange ways, He would be destroying the results of that karma.*I will tell a small episode illustrating this. Listen carefully.

"From the time of the birth of Srīpāda, there was the problem with the scarcity of milk. Sumatī Maharani was not having sufficient milk for the child. There was a cow in their house. A small quantity of milk was needed in their house for making an offering to Kālāgni Shamana Datta[2]. The cow used to only give that much small quantity of milk, but it used to give milk to its calf to full satisfaction. This was a peculiar situation.

"At times, Srīpāda used to stealthily enter the pūja room and drink the small quantity of milk kept for Kālāgni Shamana Datta even before the offering was made. On such days, Srī Appalaraja Sarma used to offer a small piece of jaggery[3] as an offering[4] to Lord Datta and he used to observe fast on that day. When her husband was fasting, Sumatī Maharani also used to fast. In case He waited up to the time of naivedya, Srīpāda alone used to drink that milk. The parents were feeling very unhappy that they could not afford to give sufficient milk to the exceptional divine child born to them. Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti and Narasimha

1 Here: Punya
2 One of the sixteen Avatars of Lord Dattatreya, as the fire of time
3 Cane sugar
4 Here: Naivedya

Varma tried many a time to donate a cow which gave abundant milk to Appalaraja Sarma. All their attempts were in vain. Appalaraja Sarma did not accept a donation under any circumstances. That was his vow. He was of the opinion that acceptance of a donation would bring sin. As he was a Vedic scholar, he used to accept rewards presented in Vedic conferences. His income from priesthood was very meagre. He was conducting priesthood only to Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti and Narasimha Varma. When those two persons offered more money than what was normally given to other priests, Appalaraja Sarma used to decline such gestures. Srī Appalaraja Sarma did not accept anything even from his father-in-law, Srī Bāpanārya. The birthday of Sumatī Maharani was on the Kārtika[1] full moon. Only on that day, Appalaraja Sarma was dining in the house of Srī Bāpanārya. In the same way, on Vaisākha Suddha Trutīya[2], which was his birthday, he used to take meals in the house of his father-in-law. In the course of time, he was taking meals in the house of his father-in-law on Ganesh Chaturdhi[3] also, as it was the day of Srīpāda's birthday.

"Thinking about the miserable state of the family, Sumatī Maharani one day said to her husband, 'My parents are well to do people. In addition, they are orthodox people observing strict spiritual discipline. I do not find anything wrong in accepting a cow from the wealthy family of our Malladi parents. We are not in a position to give enough milk to Srīpāda. I submit that you may consider this matter carefully.' Then Appalaraja Sarma replied, 'What you said is right. As Satya Rushīswara[4] is unblemished of sin, no fault is committed if a cow is accepted from him, but the approval of dharma sāstra[5] about this matter is essential. Many great personages said that Srīpāda is an incarnation of Datta. Many astonishing things are happening from the time preceding His birth up to this time. If this is the new incarnation of Datta, the cow in our house must give abundant milk and you must have sufficient milk. Not only that, our eldest son Srīdhararaja Sarma is blind and the younger son Ramaraja

1 Name of an Indian month corresponding to Scorpio
2 3rd ascending moon phase in the month of Vaisākha, April-May
3 A festival in honour of Lord Ganesha, celebrated the 4th ascending moon phase in Virgo
4 Rishi of truth, the upholder of truth; one of the honourary titles given to Bāpanārya
5 Scripture dealing with ethical principles and regulations

Sarma is lame. Srīpāda could free both of them from the physical disabilities. You can discuss this matter with your father or you can ask Srīpāda Himself. But it is not proper for God to create such a complicated problem that I have to violate my vow.'

"Sumatī Maharani submitted this matter to her father. Bāpanāryulu smiled and said, 'My dear, this is all a play of Srīpāda. *Srīpāda is skilful not only in solving problems, He is skilful in creating problems also*. I noticed through yogic vision that Srīpāda is Datta. We have a number of cows in our house. I am not only agreeable but will also feel extremely happy to give you a cow. Lord Datta very much likes cows' milk. The approval of dharma sāstra is also necessary, as told by your husband. Oh, what an irony of fate! There are countless sons-in-laws in this world who through various means attempt to grab the wealth of their fathers-in-law, but my son-in-law stands equal to a blazing fire. We will become fools if we attempt to break his vow. Unless he receives clear permission from all the five primary elements of Creation, your husband would not accept this donation of a cow. If Srīpāda relieves His two brothers from physical handicaps, His bond of indebtedness with your family will get severed. Datta, who is freed from debt, cannot remain as a child in your house. He leaves the house as a World Teacher to uplift the world. Therefore, do not request Srīpāda even by mistake to remove the physical disability of His brothers. Everything is subservient to time. That time is under the control of Srīpāda. If Srīpāda wills, you would get plenty of milk, but the link of indebtedness with Him will be lost to you. Once He is redeemed of debt, Lord Datta would not limit Himself to our family. He escapes from the house to assume the role of a preceptor of the universe. If Srīpāda desires, the cow in your house would produce adequate milk and would give milk properly abandoning its peculiar nature. Then this problem would not rise at all. Therefore, have patience for some time. Datta, who created this knotty problem, will Himself solve it'."

Then I asked, "Sir, what is the reason for the brothers of Srīpāda to be born with physical defects? Are there any hereditary lapses of karma relating to the family?"

Tirumala Das answered, "My dear, *Srī Dattatreya incarnated during the dusk hours. Srīpāda incarnated during the dawn hours. The ensuing incarnation of Srī Narasimha Saraswati will take place during midday in*

the Abhijīt lagna[1]. The sportive plays of Datta are profound. Darkness spreads after dusk and living beings remain in a sleepy condition. Therefore, the incarnation of Datta assumed full responsibility for the process of the development of yogic endeavours and also allowed the living creatures to enjoy comfortable sleep. In thick darkness, people do not know which direction to proceed, what to do and how to move in the process of evolution. *The significance of the Datta incarnation is to achieve evolution and development in people without them being aware of it*. Without any effort on their part or with little effort, living beings travelled from the deep inner consciousness towards spiritual evolution in methods unknown to them. This is not limited to the Earth only.

"Srīpāda arrived during dawn. During dawn, all the powers of the Sun God shine forth at once and purify all creatures. Their soul is a replica of the Sun. This indicates the development and awaking of an infinite variety of powers within the creatures. The midday Sun is the form of a fierce and terrible raging fire. The purpose of the incarnation of Srī Narasimha Saraswati is to make the solar soul spread out abundantly and freely with complete powers and awaken all living beings. These matters relate to His consciousness, which spreads all over the universe.

"Between the incarnation of Datta and the incarnation of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, a long black night intervened. That was a full embodiment of the greater gloom. Representing that, the elder brother Srīdhararaja Sarma was born. After the dark period elapsed, there was the advent of another state during which doubts, atheistic arguments, tricky logics, and perverted interpretations prevailed. Representing that, the younger brother, Srī Ramaraja Sarma, was born. *Any living creature can attain the grace of Srīpāda only after leaving the darkness of inertia and overcoming the mental wavering of bad arguments, doubts and distorted interpretations*. This is the secret in this. These matters concern the evolution of living beings in the universe.

"In addition, there were certain mistakes made by the family in their past actions. Even though Srī Appalaraja Sarma belonged to the sect of Vaidika Velanati Brahmin, their family had the headmanship of the village. The name of the paternal grandfather of Srīpāda was Srīdhara

1 Ascendant, the zodiac sign that is rising at the time of birth

Ramaraja Sarma. It was the custom for Brahmins having administrative powers over the village, to affix the title Raja to their names. The word Sarma denotes that the individual is a Brahmin.

"Srīdhara Ramaraja Sarma was the village officer of the Aiynavilli village. In their family, the eldest son would get the headmanship of the village. Taxes had to be paid to the zamindars[1] irrespective of the fact whether there was a good yield of crops or a failure of crops, and it was the responsibility of the village headman to collect taxes, sometimes through coercion. Therefore, Srīdhara Ramaraja Sarma had to collect taxes through violent means to comply with the orders of the zamindar, without having any regard to his personal likes and dislikes. That was his duty and dharma, but in the eyes of God it was a sin. The headmanship was inherited by the eldest brother of Srī Appalaraja Sarma.

"On account of the sinful acts of their grandfather, Srīpāda's eldest brother, Srīdhararaja Sarma, and the next eldest brother, Ramaraja Sarma, were born with congenital physical defects. *Even though Srīpāda Srīvallabha is verily the incarnation of Lord Datta, He also had to suffer a little from the influence of the sinful acts of His grandfather. That was the reason why He had to face the shortage of milk. The Lord of the universe will apply the regulations formulated by Him to all. Srīpāda showed us the way, by way of suffering the effects of karma by Him also, even though He came as an incarnation.*

"Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti and Srī Vatsavāyi Narasimha Varma regarded Srīpāda as their own grandson. They thought for a long while on how to solve the milk shortage problem that has been troubling Srīpāda. Srī Varma called Srī Sreshti and requested him to come up with a plan to solve the problem. There were some cows born to a well-known cow called Gayatri, which was in the custody of Srī Varma. Srī Sreshti bought from Srī Varma a cow having all auspicious qualities. Srī Varma kept all the proceeds carefully with him. In the meanwhile, Srī Appalaraja Sarma came to the house of Srī Varma to perform priestly duties. Srī Varma gave the money received by sale of the cow to Srī Appalaraja Sarma on that occasion. That amount of money was disproportionately large compared to the normal honorarium given to priests for similar functions. Srī

1 An Indian aristocrat, often a prince, with the right to collect taxes

Appalaraja Sarma took out of that money what was justly due to him and rejected the rest of the money. Then Srī Varma also refused to take back that rejected money. He said that as a noble Kshatriya, he would not accept back the money that he donated. This dispute was referred to Srī Bāpanārya. The council of Brahmins was convened. Srī Bāpanārya announced in the meeting, 'Anyone who wishes to take the money rejected by Appalaraja Sarma can do so.' Many Brahmins competed with each other to claim that money. It was all an abnormal obstinate matter.

"Then a youth named Papayya Sastry said, 'Srīpāda is not an incarnation of God. If He is God, why should this strange condition come to pass? If He is Datta, why did He not save His two brothers from physical infirmity? Certain incidents took place at random since Srīpāda was born. To blow them out of proportion is a crime. I am a devotee of Datta. I also obtained swetarkaraksha[1] from my preceptor. I am doing a good amount of japa[2] every day. No taint would stick to me even if I accept this donation. This money may be given to me as I am worthy of it.' The council of Brahmins gave the money to Papayya Sastry. A good cow could be purchased with that money. Papayya Sastry went to his house after the meeting with the pride of victory. By the time he reached home, his uncle was in his house waiting for him. They had a dialogue for some time. Papayya requested his uncle to dine. The uncle replied that he would take meals once a year, and that it was not possible for him to take meals then in his nephew's house. Saying so he immediately left.

"After his uncle left, Papayya sat completely absorbed in thought. His wife came and asked, 'Sir, this uncle who came now closely resembled your own uncle who died last year. Is it not?' Papayya was aghast. He had only one uncle and that uncle died last year. Then who was that new uncle? In what a fantasy his intellect was? Even though he had some other relatives, none of them resembled him exactly in all respects. Had he seen the dead soul of his uncle? His heart began to beat violently. Through mantras and tantras, he did not have any connection with devils and demons. Had he fallen from the grace of Srī Datta? Who was being

1 A talisman worn for self-protection, made from the white milk-weed plant (Calotropis gigantea, also called Madar); deemed to protect the wearer from bad influences when bestowed by one's guru

2 Repetition of the name of God

worshipped by him now? Would the coming time be a bad one? The words of his uncle while departing from the house, 'I hope you will meet me shortly,' began to torment his mind in various ways. Was he going to meet his uncle in the next world after dying shortly? His heart became heavy. He chanted the mantra 'Om Drām Dattatreyaya Namaha'. He could not carry on the meditation with single-minded devotion. He went to the Srī Kukkuteswara temple[1] to see Swayambhū Datta. He began to meditate upon Datta. In that meditation he saw Datta without a head. When he started to do japa, his mind was vacillating. The prasād[2] given by the priest appeared to have been dipped in a jar filled with poison. The priest was laughing and telling something, but Papayya Sastry heard a message that he would soon die after eating the prasād. When Papayya returned home, he did not find the vermilion mark on the forehead of his wife. He asked his wife why she removed the vermilion mark even when he was alive. She wondered as to why her husband was rebuking her even when she had a big vermilion mark on her forehead. Propaganda that Papayya lost his mental balance gained speed. Pīthikapuram was full of rumours, criticisms and canards. Papayya was given psychological treatment and treatment for possession by spirits. He was telling that he was not mad and all that he was telling was true. People there were discussing among themselves that a lunatic also would sometimes speak logically. Papayya's wife had a good idea. She thought that this was the result of her husband's bad deed of abusing Srīpāda out of his ignorance. It occurred to her that it was better to seek refuge of the living Srīpāda shining with divine lustre than to bow before speechless stone images of deities.

"She went to the house of Srīpāda. She took the boy in her arms and kissed Him. When they were alone, she narrated her plight to Him. Srīpāda then said, 'Aunt, all this will subside with a small adjustment. As you are like My mother, I am telling you a secret. Construct a new house without any delay. When you and uncle enter the new house after performing vāstu puja, everything will become steady.' She did not divulge this discussion with Srīpāda to anyone. She convinced her people saying that the troubles plagued them because they resided in a rented house

1 Temple in Pithapuram
2 Food given as an offering

and that they must construct their own house immediately. Someone gave a forsaken pit as a donation of land to Papayya. It was immediately filled up with great labour and expense. For the construction of the new house, all the money, gold and valuables in the house were spent. Some money was also borrowed. Mountain rocks were brought. They were broken into pieces and were used in the construction of the house. Papayya became healthy as soon as they entered the new house.

"Dear Shankar Bhatt, *Papayya was passing through a period of impending death. Srīpāda saved him from dying at an early age. Srīpāda destroyed Papayya's karma by making him suffer mental torture and insult and by making him spend money. Not only that, the evil karma of Papayya was attracted into the hilly rocks and by breaking them into small pieces, the karma of Papayya was destroyed.* The methods employed by siddhas and avadhūtas are very strange. Srīpāda said to Papayya, who regained his health, 'What a fool you are! You have no head! You are an unfortunate fellow who could not recognize the deity whom you worship sincerely, who is before you in human form as Srīpāda. You believed that the rocky Datta image in the Kukkuteswara temple is your saviour. I am the Datta who attracted the fruits of your sins into the stones and by breaking them into small pieces, I erased your karma. I also granted you a new house. *If you had reposed faith in this living Datta in human form, I would have attracted all your evil tendencies unto My body and saved you by nullifying your karma. The fruits of grace of God depend upon the mental disposition of the devotee.'* After this līla[1] of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, Papayya recognised Him as an incarnation of Datta.

"The shortage of milk for Srīpāda was causing trouble to Srī Sreshti and Srī Varma. They approached Srī Bāpanārya and said, 'Oh Rajarishī, like King Janaka you are a Brahmajnāni[2] absorbed in the Supreme even when leading a worldly life. Here is a small submission. You have to approve it.' Bāpanārya replied, 'How can I express my approval without knowing the submission? Tell me the matter without any hesitation. If it satisfies the principles of dharma, I will certainly approve it.' Then Srī Sreshti said, 'I purchased from Srī Varma a good featured cow belonging to the progeny of cow Gayatri. I want to give it to our family priest Srī

1 Sportive play
2 Someone who has realized the knowledge of the highest Self

Appalaraja Sarma. If that cow's milk is used for the service of Srīpāda, we will feel extremely happy. Nothing more than that is desired by us.'

"On hearing the words of Srī Sreshti, Srī Bāpanārya said, 'Alright. Send that cow to our house. I will try to give it to Srī Appalaraja. The stay of that auspicious cow in the house of Srī Appalaraja is especially beneficial both to the donor and the acceptor.'

"The cow was brought to the house of Srī Bāpanārya. Srī Appalaraja Sarma refused to accept it as a donation. In the Himalayas, there is an area called Satopadha. Dharmaraja and others have ascended to heaven from that area. A great person by the name Srī Satchitananda Avadhūta was living there. His age was some centuries. He was the disciple of Srī Visweswara Prabhu. He was residing at Kaivalya Srunga. Srī Visweswara Prabhu[1] told Srī Satchitananda Avadhūta that He incarnated as Srīpāda Srīvallabha in Pīthikapuram and that Srī Satchitananda should see His childhood form and be blessed. Srī Avadhūta visited Pīthikapuram. Srī Bāpanārya cordially welcomed him. He saw Lord Datta in the form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha and his life got fulfilled. The problem of the paucity of milk was brought before him. Srī Avadhūta emphatically said that Appalaraja Sarma should accept the donation of the cow and that Srīpāda was verily Lord Datta Himself and that with useless restrictions, the magnificent service of providing milk to Lord Datta should not be lost. The council of Brahmins asked for proof to say that Srīpāda was Datta. Srī Avadhūta said that he would give evidence through the five elements.

The five elements giving evidence that Srīpāda Himself is Dattatreya

"A ritual was commenced by Srī Avadhūta. Mother Earth gave evidence that since Srīpāda was Srī Datta it was not wrong for Appalaraja Sarma to accept the donation of the cow. Moreover, that which was given with love by the father-in-law to his son-in-law cannot be counted as a donation. Therefore, Srī Bāpanārya could take it as a donation from Sreshti and he could give it as a gift to his son-in-law. This was the statement of Mother Earth. After the

1 A manifestation of Lord Shiva

ritual started, it rained all around except in the place of the ritual. This was accepted as a second evidence. The God of Fire personally took the offerings in the ritual and explained that accepting the donation of a cow was not wrong. This was accepted as the third testimony. The wind shook with terrible speed all the area except the venue of ritual. This was regarded as the fourth evidence. A divine voice from the sky announced that Srīpāda was in reality Lord Datta Himself. After accepting the testimonies from the five elements, Appalaraja Sarma accepted the donation of cow. The fruits of the cow donation accrued to Srī Sreshti. Therefore, it was decided that the price of the cow should be given by Narasimha Varma to Srī Appalaraja. In this manner and in the presence of Srī Avadhūta, a rare meritorious virtue became available to Srī Sreshti and to Srī Vatsavāyi Varma.

Previous birth story of Sumatī and Appalaraja

"Srī Avadhūta said, 'People of Pīthikapuram! What sort of foolish people are you? You are unable to recognize Srīpāda who is moving in front of you as Lord Datta. Worship to the stone idol of Swayambhu Datta has been going on for many thousands of years. The Lord who was in the form of a stone idol has now become dynamic and manifested with a body as Srīpāda Srīvallabha. Praying to Him to take birth as an avatar and then rejecting Him when he took birth as an avatar is sinful. I, having many hundreds of years of age, came here to have dārshan of Srīpāda. *The famous Vishnu Datta and Susīla mentioned in Datta Purana are now born as Appalaraja Sarma and Sumatī Maharani*.

"There was a maharshi by the name Lābhāda in Krita Yuga. He became eligible for Srī Datta's special grace. He prayed to Datta that he would like to see Datta as a child and would like to rear that complete Parabrahman's avatar with fatherly affection. Srī Datta said that his desire would be fulfilled during Krishna Avatar. Lābhāda Maharshi was born as Nanda. His wife was born as Yashoda. Because of the merit they received by worshipping Shiva at pradosha[1] time on Saturdays, Srī Krishna grew up as the child of Nanda and

1 Worship of Lord Shiva on Saturday evening

Yashoda. But in the Yadava caste[1], Musalam[2] developed and all Yadavas perished. Nanda was born as Bhaskarācharya[3] with the surname Ramadagula, when Srī Ambika was born as Vasavī Kanyaka Parameswari. When Ārya Vaishyas immolated in the fire pit[4], at least one person remained in each lineage[5], but no one remained in Lābhāda Maharshi's lineage. So, it was decided that Ārya Vaishyas should compulsorily remember Lābhāda Maharshi. When the self-immolation[6] of Arya Vaishyas in the fire pit was over, Srī Bhaskarācharya went into meditation in the meditation room of his house. One of the ancestors of Srī Bhaskarācharya was a devotee of Srī Rama. Srī Rama gave dārshan to that devotee once. At the same time, he had to go to serve his parents. So, he asked Srī Rama to stay there till he came back. Srī Rama's foot prints were clearly imprinted in their house. Mother Vasavī now appeared to Bhaskarācharya standing in those foot prints after the self-immolation was complete. Bhaskarācharya wept inconsolably. After a few moments, a child was seen at the same place. That child was none other than Srī Datta. The Lord said, 'Grandfather, Myself and My sister Vasavī will always move before your eyes as small children. How can we stay away from you? You are the Lābhāda Maharshi who has taken birth on this Earth. Your lineage has no survivors now. It is a common thing that happens when one does extremely great merit or extremely great sins. When you were Nanda, you acquired great merit. When there is no one eligible to be born in that great meritorious family line[7], that family line discontinues. Because of the great merit you received earlier, you are now born as Bhaskarācharya and have seen the incarnation of Vasavamba[8]. As there are no survivors in the lineage of Lābhāda, you are agitated without your knowledge.

"I am now giving you My assurance. The Ramadagula[9] vamsam in which you are born will not perish. It will run till the end of Kali Yuga.

1 An ancient warrior clan during the times of Krishna; today primarily a caste of cattle rearing people
2 A curse, a destructive tendency
3 The spiritual guru of the Ārya Vaishya community in the Brihat Sila Kingdom
4 Here: Agni kundam
5 Here: Gotra
6 Here: Ahuthi
7 Here: Vamsam
8 The divine mother descended as a princess of the Brihat Sila Nagaram kingdom with the name Vasavī
9 Family name

When I take an incarnation as Srīpāda Srīvallabha, you will have to be born as My grandfather. At that time, you will have the house name Malladi and will be known as Bapannāvadhanulu. Malladi vamsam also will not perish till the end of Kali Yuga.'

Previous births of Samardha Ramadas, Shivaji Maharaj and Srīdhara Swamī

"My dear, in accordance with the promise given in Brihat Sila Nagaram, these things are happening now in Pīthikapuram. *Srīpāda's eldest brother will be released from his blindness and he will become a great pandit. After leaving that body, he will stay in Hiranya Lokam for some time. Then by the will of Srīpāda, he will be born as Samardha Ramadas in Sajjanagada in the area of Maratha*[1]*. Narasimha Varma, who got the fruit of the donation of a cow to Srīpāda, after leaving his body, will become a Chatrapathi*[2] *with the name of Shivaji Maharaj*[3] *and strive to establish a Hindu kingdom. He will go to Srisailam and get blessings. He will become famous as the dear disciple of Samardha Ramadas. Srīpāda's second elder brother Ramaraja Sharma also will get liberated from his lameness and will become a great pandit. After leaving that body, he will stay in Hiranya Lokam for some time and again will take birth as Srīdhara and become an avadhūta.*

The divine power cannot be comprehended and cannot be transgressed

"Whatever I say is true in every letter. Whether you believe it or not, truth remains truth. If all the people in the world argue that there is no Sun, the Sun will not disappear. *The Divine is very strange. God has the power to create troubles to even rich people or even great kings who enjoy all riches. Similarly, God also has the power to remove the troubles.*

1 Sajjanagada is located in the modern state of Maharashtra, where Samardha Ramadas incarnated
2 Monarch
3 A great Indian warrior king (1627/30 – 1680)

"In the future, Vāyasapura agrahāram, which will be called Kokanada[1]*, Shyamalambapura*[2] *and Srī Pīthikapuram will amalgamate and will develop into a mega city. One day or the other, in one birth or the other, people from all countries in the world, people from all races and all traditions will come to Pīthikapuram and have the dārshan of Srī Swamī. The biography of Srīpāda, written in Sanskrit and titled as Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam, would receive the blessings of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. According to the will of Srīpāda, that volume written on bhūrja patra*[3] *would be kept buried in an invisible form many fathoms*[4] *deep underground in the birthplace of Srīpāda. His pādukas*[5] *would be installed and a temple would be constructed at His birthplace*. Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti, an eminent affluent merchant who could donate a cow to Srīpāda, was indeed a very worthy person. His life became an illustrious one. There would be no shortage of wealth in their family. He would stay for some time in Hiranya Loka[6] and after that he would take birth in Maharashtra in a very wealthy Vaishya family and witness the incarnation of Srī Narasimha Saraswati also.

"My dear Shankar Bhatt, this episode of the donation of the cow is indeed very auspicious. You can now proceed to Kuruvapuram. May Srīpāda Srīvallabha protect you always!"

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

1 Kakinada
2 Samarlakota
3 Bark leaves of the Indian birch tree
4 An old measure; 1 fathom = 6 feet or 1.83 metres
5 Sandals worshipped as holy
6 Literally: 'Illumined astral planet'; can be translated as astral plane

Chapter 10

Description of the Forms of Narasimha Swamī

I took the permission of Tirumala Das and continued my travel towards Kuruvapuram. As I was recollecting the divine plays of Srīpāda, a tingling thrill of horripilation overtook my body. On the way I saw a holy audumbara tree[1] at a distance. It was midday. I was very hungry. I thought of collecting alms from a Brahmin village if it was nearby. I thought that I could take rest under the holy audumbara tree and recover from the travel fatigue. I noticed that someone was resting under the shade of the audumbara tree. As I went further, I could see that the person was wearing a holy thread[2].

I came nearer to the audumbara tree. The stranger cordially invited me and asked me to sit down. Compassion was oozing from his eyes. There was a basket before him. There was no food in it. Only a copper vessel was there. He was chanting the name of Srīpāda Vallabha frequently. I asked him with eagerness, "Sir, are you a devotee of Srīpāda? Have you seen that great Holy Person?"

He said: "Sir, I was born in a noble Vaishya family. My name is Subbayya Sreshti. I lost my parents in my childhood. There were abundant heaps of money in my house. I was going to distant places and conducting business with many varieties of sales and purchases. I was frequently going to Kanchīpuram[3]. I developed intimacy in that town with a prostitute by the name of Chintamani. I spent a lot of money lavishly on her. A Brahmin named Bilwamangala of the Pālakādu[4] town in Kerala was also visiting Kānchīpuram for the purposes of trade. He was selling fragrant materials to Arabs in exchange for diamonds and horses. Sometimes both of us used to do joint trading activities. Kings and emperors were buying horses of

1 Very sacred Indian fig tree (Ficus racemosa)
2 The thread of Brahmins from the initiation into the Gayatri mantram
3 A city in Tamil Nadu
4 Palakkad or Palghad, city in Kerala

high breed from us. Due to ill luck, both of us had fallen down from virtue because of our contact with the prostitute.

"For some time, our purchase and sale transactions with Arabs went well. Afterwards, they took lots of money from us and instead of giving good horses they gave us very inferior quality horses. We lost heavily in the business. With the losses in business, our properties were also lost. My wife died with mental anguish. I had a son who was mentally unstable. He also met with untimely death.

"Srī Pīthikapuram with the Pādagaya tīrtha[1], which can be called as the best one among tīrthas, was my native place. On account of my ignorance, I was insulting deities and Brahmins. I was adopting cruel methods to collect repayment of loans. Once, a large number of relatives came from Ayinavilli village to Srī Appalaraja Sarma's house. Srī Appalaraja did not have sufficient money to arrange boarding and other facilities for all of them. If approached, Srī Sreshti would have provided all the materials free of cost as Srī Sarma was their family priest. It would then become a donation, but Srī Appalaraja Sarma did not want to accept any donation. Under unavoidable circumstances, he took articles costing one varahā[2] from my shop on credit.

"After the departure of the relatives, I harassed Raja Sarma to repay the debt. Raja Sarma replied that he did not have any money with him at that time and that he would definitely clear the debt as soon as money became available. I was an expert in collecting compound interest. Time was passing by. I added interest to interest and prepared bogus calculations. I demanded that Raja Sarma should pay me ten varahās to settle the dues. Raja Sarma would need to sell away his house if he had to pay that much amount. According to the rates prevailing at that time, I could take over his house and just pay one or two varahās as the sale price. I was telling this before all people. My resolve was to expropriate Raja Sarma of his house. Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti, who noticed my ill intention, said, 'You wicked fellow, you are prattling as you like, blinded by the arrogance of riches! When you insult our revered family priest it tantamounts to dishonouring us. Unless you change your ways, you will be

1 Thīrtha: place of pilgrimage associated with sacred water; Pādagaya Thīrtha: the place where the feet of the asura (demon) Gaya fell

2 Denomination of currency which was in use in South India in the past

put to heavy loss. By harassing Raja Sarma, who is more pious than a blazing fire, you will fall into Raurava[1] and other kinds of hell.'

"Once Srīpāda was at the house of Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti. I jeeringly said to Sreshti, 'If Raja Sarma could not repay my debt, he can send one of his sons to serve in my shop; or he can himself serve there. One son is blind, the second one is lame and the third one, Srīpāda, is three years old. Then, how can my debt be cleared?' Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti was very hurt. Tears were flowing from his eyes like a torrent. Srīpāda wiped those tears with His divine hands. He said, 'Grandfather, why fear when I am here? I am the one who killed Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakasipu. Will it be difficult for Me to redeem the debt of Subbayya?' Srīpāda looked towards me and said, 'I will clear your debt. Come on. Let us go to your shop. I will serve in your shop and wipe out the debt due to you. After the clearance of the debt, Goddess Lakshmi will not reside in your house. Think carefully.'

"Blinded by pride and very cruel by nature, I agreed to the proposal. Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti carried Srīpāda on his shoulders and brought Him to my shop and said, 'Subbayya, I will work in your shop in the place of Srīpāda. Do you agree?' I agreed to it. In the meanwhile, an ascetic with matted hair came to me and asked about the location of Subbayya Sreshti's shop. I told him that I was Subbayya Sreshti and the shop where we met was actually mine. Then he said, 'Sir, I want a copper vessel urgently. It does not matter even if the price is high. If you kindly give me the copper vessel immediately I will take it and go away.' I had thirty-two copper vessels, but I told him that I had only one copper vessel and that I would part with it if he could give ten varahās. He readily agreed, but he imposed one condition: that Srīpāda, who was sitting in the lap of Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti, should give the copper vessel with His own hands. Srīpāda agreed to that. The ascetic received the copper vessel from the hands of Srīpāda. Srīpāda laughed. The ascetic wearing matted hair also laughed. Srīpāda told the ascetic, 'Your wish is satisfied. Goddess Lakshmi will stay in your house undistributed. Give up this ascetic order and return to your home. Your wife and children are waiting for you.' The ascetic with the matted hair was full of happiness and left. I wished to put

1 The hell for humans who harm other living beings; the beings hurt by such a man take to the form of serpent-like beings and torture this person.

Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti and Appalaraja Sarma to shame. My desire was fulfilled on that day. I proudly said, 'Today with the sale of a copper vessel I got plenty of money. I am of the view that the debt of ten varahās, which Appalaraja Sarma owed to me, is repaid. Therefore, from this moment on Srīpāda is released from bondage.' However, Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti wanted that the statement should be made by swearing on Goddess Gayatri as a witness. Since I was an unfortunate fellow, I did swear on Goddess Gayatri.

"My boy Shankar Bhatt, *even if a small piece of copper is received from avadhūtas and siddhas, as a token of their grace, the receiver would derive abundant wealth*. What a great fortunate one was that ascetic! He received from Srīpāda, the incarnation of Datta, a copper vessel in a gracious way. I was an extremely unfortunate one. From that moment, the spark of Goddess Lakshmi glowing internally in my body, mind and soul started diminishing. The sportive plays of Srīpāda are unimaginable and unthinkable. Every word uttered in His presence would come true. When I had thirty-two copper vessels, I lied that I was having only one. Srīpāda turned my lie into a truth. When I checked my shop after the departure of Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti and Srīpāda, I found only one copper vessel instead of thirty-one. I showed false accounts that I should get ten varahās. By this sportive play, Srīpāda removed some misgivings of Srī Appalaraja Sarma. Dawn and dusk are very sacred times. Worship of fire in the early morning twilight, and in the evening twilight yields admirable results. In the early dawn, all the energies of the Sun God are ready to prevail. During dusk, all the energies of the Sun God retreat and join Him."

Then I said, "Sir, I heard before that by accepting a donation the merit of good deeds[1] would dwindle, but I heard only from you that the non-acceptance of a donation would result in sin. I did not understand this. Not only that, you are telling that Srīpāda is an incarnation of Srī Dattatreya. People say He is an incarnation of Narasimha and Shiva in different ways. I do not understand how the nature of Anasuya exists internally in Shiva. Kindly explain in detail."

Then Subbayya Sreshti said, "You are hungry. Srīvallabha often instructs His disciples to give good water for drinking and good food for

1 Here: Punya

eating to anyone who comes to your house seeking food without considering the differences of race and caste. You take meals first. There is a pond nearby. Please come here after cleansing yourself in the pond. In the meanwhile, I will bring two plantain leaves from the plantain trees seen yonder. Green cucumber with dal is the curry for the meals. It will be very tasty like a sweet elixir."

I was astonished. There was nothing in the basket except for the copper vessel. There were no food, fruits or vegetable roots. Above all, he was saying that cucumber dal would be available as a dish for the meals. I went to the pond to wash my hands and feet. Subbayya Sreshti went towards the plantain trees.

After washing myself, I came back from the pond. Subbayya Sreshti brought two plantain leaves. He collected leaves from the nearby palm trees and made small cups from them. I watched this strange happening with wonder. He closed his eyes and meditated for a while. After that, he poured water from the empty copper vessel into the two leafy cups. The flow of water from that empty copper vessel was a wonder. From the empty copper vessel, he then served the curry. Then he served rice from the empty copper vessel. Both of us had that sumptuous and very tasty food as a prasād. The copper vessel remained empty as before as we finished our meals.

The effect of worship of Lord Shiva during Saturday evening twilight time. Srīpāda, an embodiment of all deities

"Saturn[1] is Karmakāra, the one who makes people act. There are two shadow planets, Rāhu and Ketu[2]. Rāhu gives results similar to Saturn. Ketu gives results similar to Mars. Saturn, the Karmakāra, is the son of the Sun — a witness to all karma. Therefore, evening dusk of Saturday is very powerful. Chaturdhi[3] and Trayodasi[4] are strong tithis[5] for Rāhu. *Hence, an individual who worships Shiva during the great sacred time of*

1 Here: Sani
2 Rāhu is the North Node and Ketu is the South Node; in Indian astrology, they are regarded as planets.
3 The 4th lunar day
4 The 13th lunar day
5 Lunar days; longitudinal angles between Moon and the Sun

Sani Trayodasi[1] *during the evening twilight would be completely freed from the results of all the heinous sins committed in previous lives.*

*"Srīpāda incarnated in the star Chitra presided over by the planet Mars. Therefore, if Srīpāda is worshipped during the time of the Chitra star, all afflictions of the planets would abate.*The planet Mars is the cause for wars, accidents, untimely deaths from weapons and missiles, leading a life with misery and indebtedness. Runa (debt) means sin and aruna means that which is sinless. *During the time of Chitra star or on Tuesday, Srīpāda shines with crimson colour. He remains in the form of Arunāchaleswara on that day. Hence, worshipping Srīpāda Srīvallabha particularly on Tuesdays with Chitra star is very very auspicious.* Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti, Narasimha Varma and Bāpanārya used to participate in the worship of Shiva during Saturday evenings. Appalaraja Sarma also used to observe very strict spiritual discipline on that day. Akhanda Lakshmi Sowbhagyavati Sumatī Maharani was meditating upon the great aspect of Anasuya which was indwelling in the form of Shiva. As a result of these great penances, the advent of Srīpāda took place. Srīpāda wanted to teach His father silently that on account of the above circumstances any amount received from Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti, Srī Narasimha Varma and Srī Bāpanārya cannot be construed as a donation. He wanted to make it clear that on the other hand, it was a great sin not to accept money from them. Shankar Bhatt, *Srīpāda is an embodiment of all deities. His nature is a magnificent one which transcends all the forms of deities. Those who saw Him, touched by Him and conversed with Him are indeed fortunate.*"

Subbayya Sreshti began to narrate, "The news that Srīpāda redeemed His father from debt through this novel method spread like wildfire in Pīthikapuram. Srīpāda was a lad of three years. Tears flowed from the eyes of Appalaraja Sarma incessantly. Sumatī Maharani hugged her darling son to her bosom and remained for a very long time in a state of trance. Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti, Narasimha Varma and Srī Bāpanārya came to the house of Appalaraja Sarma. Srīpāda stated that it is the duty of a son to free His father from indebtedness. I was also invited to visit the house of Srī Appalaraja Sarma. I announced in the presence of all elders

1 The 13th lunar phase occurring on a Saturday

who assembled there that the debt of Srī Appalaraja Sarma was fully cleared. Appalaraja Sarma did not agree to that. Appalaraja Sarma questioned how his debt was repaid when some ascetic came and purchased a copper vessel by paying ten varahās. Then an interesting discussion took place.

"Srī Bāpanārya asked Srīpāda, 'Do you know that ascetic with matted hair?' Then Srīpāda replied, 'Not only that ascetic, I know about all the ascetics.'

The nature of Srīpāda

Bāpanārya: 'You are a boy of three years. You are uttering words that are much beyond your age. Are you omniscient?'

Srīpāda: 'You all are thinking that My age is three years, but I do not think so. My age is many lakhs[1] of years. I was in existence prior to this creation. I would continue even after the great pralaya[2]. I would be there during the activities of creation. Creation, sustenance and liquidation would not take place without Me. I observe all these as a witness.'

Bāpanārya: 'Srīpadā, if a small child simply imagines that he is on the moon, it does not mean that he actually is on the moon. One must have direct experience. Omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence are the attributes of the Lord of the universe only.'

Srīpāda: 'I am the primordial nature that steadily exists at all times and at all places. My existence reveals itself in accordance with the particular requirements of a particular time and place. It does not imply that I am not in existence at a particular place merely because I did not reveal Myself. I stay in the annamaya, prānamaya, manomaya, vigyanamaya and ānandamaya koshas[3]. These koshas[4] carry on their functions only because of My presence. If I give you an experience of My dwelling in a particular kosha, you will feel that I am in that kosha. However, it does not mean that

1 Indian numbering unit equaling one hundred thousand (100,000)
2 Final destruction of the world
3 The layers of the dense physical body, of the vital plane, the mental plane, the Buddhic plane of wisdom, the plane of bliss
4 Sheath, layer

I do not reside in the other koshas simply because I did not give you an experience there. I pervade at all times and at all places. All knowledge and wisdom is at My feet. This Creation was formed on the basis of My will. What is there to wonder in saying that I am omnipotent?'

Appalaraja Sarma: 'My dear, You are an enigma for us since Your childhood. You are repeatedly saying that You are Lord Datta. You are also declaring again and again that You would come in another incarnation under the name Narasimha Saraswati. People are like crows. They are commenting in various ways terming Your actions as histrionics, mentally imbalanced idiocy and guileful tricks. We are Brahmins. It is better that we observe the righteous acts prescribed for us. Going beyond that, and proclaiming that we are incarnations and divine personages, would be considered as arrogance.'

Srīpāda: 'Father, I do not deny what you say. However, I must speak truth only. When the matter of My milk debt came up, I felt entertained. If I aver that I am not Lord Datta, even after the five elements testified that it is so, would I not be guilty of speaking untruth? If someone tells the Sun shining in the sky that he is not the Sun, will the Sun become someone else? Truth is conditioned by space and time. The Brahmins of Pīthikapuram are experiencing human nature feeling that they are living bodies and individuals. In the same manner, I am reminding you again and again that I am Datta with omniscience, omnipresence and omnipotence as My nature. Aeons may pass on. Many worlds may undergo creation, sustenance and annihilation, but how is it that I, who am Datta Himself, cannot be Datta?'

Bāpanārya: 'Srīpadā, only one copper vessel remained instead of thirty-one after the departure of the ascetic. Have You played any trick and caused them to disappear?'

Srīpāda: *'Everything will happen due to some cause cropping up from time and fate. No action is possible without a cause*. This is a law in nature that cannot be violated. Subbayya Sreshti was a priest in a Datta temple located in a forest region during his previous life. People rarely visited this Datta temple in the forest region. He was mad with lust for women. Obsessed with the desire for women, he sought to sell away the big copper idol of Datta, which was worshipped by his ancestors from ancient times. He gave the money thus received to his mistress. He told

people that the Datta idol was stolen by the thieves. The ascetic who came here was a goldsmith entangled in worldly affairs in his previous life. In his previous birth as a goldsmith, he melted the statue of Datta out of greed for money. He is now born in this life as a very poor man. As the priest served the idol of Datta for many years, he is now born in this life in a wealthy family on account of that merit. The idol of Datta, which was melted in their previous lives, was made into thirty-two copper vessels and was sold. The goldsmith was worshipping Lord Narasimha. He made these copper vessels in the presence of Lord Narasimha. Therefore, on account of the will of God, the essential attributes of thirty-two incarnations of Lord Narasimha entered into the copper vessels.

"The ascetic, who had knowledge of his previous birth, worshipped Me with undivided devotion. He prayed sincerely for the removal of his poverty. I appeared in his dream and asked him to come to Pīthikapuram. I asked him to receive a copper vessel from My hands and for that he should pay ten varahās to Sreshti and thereby free him from the bondage. He did what I instructed him to do and became fortunate. I blessed that his financial problems may be solved in an unimaginable manner. He was moving in the guise of an ascetic to avoid trouble from those who lent him money. Thus, it ought to be clear that I know everything about that ascetic!

"This Subbayya Sreshti tried to collect ten varahās from our family unjustly. I arranged ten varahās to him, but to compensate it I withdrew all the good fortune earned by him in his earlier life. Subbayya Sreshti, I know of your amorous affairs with Chintamani and all your vulgar and indecent acts. Your story will remain as a comedy in the human history. You will live selling eatables carrying them in a small wooden basket. You will sell them to small children like Me. My parents arranged meals to the relatives with the money received from you. I know better than you about the false calculations when determining the interest for the money lent. The money given by you was sufficient just to cook food, dal and luffa for the relatives. The hard-earned money of My father was used to procure other materials for the meals for the relatives. When you meet with a miserable state and you cannot even get food otherwise, this copper vessel will supply you with only water, rice, dal and luffa. Only that much food sufficient for you to eat and to serve any other would be available.' Srīpāda spoke very strongly.

"The countenance of Srīpāda was formidable with divine brilliance. His eyes looked like two globes of fire. Then He said again, 'Subbayya Sreshti, a buffalo would come to the southern gate of your house this night. That is a message sent by Yamadharma Raja[1] that your death is very near. But I am showing you mercy. Feed that buffalo with rice, dal and luffa that was cooked with your own hands. That buffalo has only this wish. After eating, the buffalo would die instead of you. From that moment you would receive intimation after intimation that you are becoming terribly impoverished. Take the basket and follow My instructions. When you come across a situation where you cannot get even rice, this copper vessel will help you. I show you mercy.' Thus spoke Srīpāda with a stern voice.

"Venkatappayya Sreshti was frightened seeing an angry Srīpāda. Then Srīpāda said, 'Grandfather[2], are you afraid? I am actually Narasimha Murthy[3]! Let there be no doubt. My nature is that of Srīpāda and Srīvallabha. You are thinking that I will curse the Vaishya caste. You are agitated that I will curse all Vaishyas to become poor just as Mother Vasavī gave the curse that Vaishyas would have less beauty. Don't fear! *God will not differentiate caste and creed. In the same way a devotee has no differentiation of caste and race*. My relationship with Ārya Vaishyas is very old. Bāpanārya was Lābhāda Maharshi in the previous Yuga. I am granting you a boon. Even when the lineage of Lābhāda Maharshi in Vaishyas gets extinct, I am blessing the family of Bāpanārya till the end of Kali Yuga[4]. I am giving you a different kind of basket. The basket is full of Datta sweets. Even when you give those liberally, the stock of sweets will not diminish. This will not be visible to the naked eye. *As all the thirty-two attributes of Narasimha are in Me, Mine is the 33rd incarnation. Therefore, during the 33rd generation of your family, during the 33rd generation of Srī Bāpanārya's family and during the 33rd generation of Srī Vatsavāyi Narasimha's family, My pādukas would be installed exactly at the place of My birth in the house of Srī Bāpanārya, where I was born*. This is My assurance to the families of Vatsavāyi, Malladi and Srī Venkatappayya Sreshti. If anybody in your families adores the divine magnificent form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha in any of the traditional ninefold

1 The Lord of Death
2 It is a custom to call an elderly person as grandfather in Andhra region
3 An avatar of Lord Vishnu
4 Dark age

devotion's methods, the dogs of Datta would stand as sentinels to them in an invisible form. Vedas, Purānas, and Upanishads constantly protect them as invisible hounds and in other invisible forms.

"My pādukas will not be installed in Pīthikapuram in any other way, except the way I said today. I will always be bound to My promise. Our house gets handed down through many hands and will reach your descendants. This will be called as Datta Nilayam. I came in the form of avadhūta and asked Bhavati Bhikshām Dehi[1] and gave dārshan to Sumatī Mata in front of this house. My brother in his next birth with the name Srīdhara will be famous as a partial Datta manifestation and will come to this place three times in the form of a dog in subtle form on Saturday, July 6, 1963; Friday, September 11, 1970; and Wednesday, August 4, 1971, and will accept bhikshā. After some time, a person of the 33rd generation in the Bāpanārya's family will take food in your descendant's house of Datta Nilayam. This is My law. I have the power to fulfil My promise.'

"Then Venkatappayya Sreshti hugged Srīpāda to his bosom. Tears of joy showered from his eyes. Srī Bāpanārya was dumbfounded. Mother Sumatī fell into doubt whether it was a dream or a divine illusion. Appalaraja Sarma's mind became mute. The two brothers of Srīpāda were looking at Srīpāda with awe. They were thinking whether He was their brother or Lord Datta. They wondered at the strange event. There was no limit to my stupidity and habit of ridiculing others. So, I said, 'Srīpadā, when the rays of shakti took human form, they were present as the wives of Krishna. Was it not a fascination for women? It is said to be a divine play in case of incarnations, but in our case it is said is to be a fascination for women? What a preconception!'

"Srīpāda spoke thus, 'Srī Krishna had eight wives and sixteen thousand gopikas. Still, He remained a bachelor celibate. He was not a womanizer as you think. It was not at all a bodily relationship as you think. They were all wives in terms of the relationship of the soul. The soul that was supported was the wife and the soul that was providing the support was the husband. What was there more than that? When Devendra was cursed to take a human form, Sachi Devi was born as Draupadi. Devendra assumed five forms and was born as five Pandavas. Even though Draupadi was having five hus-

1 Literally: "Whichever honourable person is present, please give alms." The celibate spiritual student is expected to go out of the ashram and beg householder families for alms for himself and his guru, to inculcate a sense of humility.

bands, she had conjugal relation only with Arjuna. Dharma is one thing and subtle dharma is entirely different. Mother Kunti did not have the habit of speaking untruth. Only Arjuna hit the fish in the contest, and Draupadi chose Arjuna only in the contest. A virtuous wife should have six attributes. Her figure should resemble Lakshmi. Draupadi had abundant grace. She must have the patience of Mother Earth. Sahadeva knew all the events that were to take place in the future. He knew that the battle between Kauravas and Pandavas had to be fought, but before that great event many other incidents had to occur. There were many sorrowful incidents among them. He was extremely vexed whenever he thought about them. Therefore, Draupadi conducted herself with lot of patience when dealing with Sahadeva. Bhīma was a glutton. As he was consuming enormous quantities of food, he became very indolent. Therefore, he was lazy even to do his own work. So Draupadi behaved like a servant in her conduct with Bhīma. Dharmaraja was the eldest among the Pandavas. Many political problems used to trouble his mind. So Draupadi acted like a minister and offered good advice to him. Nakula was an expert swordsman who used to fight with utmost speed. He was able to wield the sword between two raindrops with such dexterity that it used to not get wet in spite of the rain. Because of the strenuous practice connected with the keen skill in martial arts, he used to become extremely hungry. Draupadi used to prepare tasty food items and serve them to him. The preparations were giving satisfaction to his mind and were suited for his practice of the battle craft. Just as a mother would understand the preferences of her child and serve eatable victuals without his asking, Draupadi used to deal with Nakula. She used to keep Arjuna happy in providing conjugal bliss. She was excelling Rambha[1] in the art of the comfort of the bed. Though she had five husbands, she gave the comfort of bed only to Arjuna without breaking dharma.

"'Subbayya Sreshti, your concubine Chintamani gave sexual pleasure not only to you, but also to Bilwamangala and many others as well. When you visit Pānakāla Narasimha Swamī in Mangalagiri of Guntur region, you will come across Chintamani and Bilwamangala there due to causes of time and fate. You will bring them to Pīthikapuram. Then I will preach you all about righteousness.'

1 An apsara, a magical and beautiful female being.

"Then Srī Narasimha Varma took Srīpāda into his lap. Srīpāda said to Srī Varma, 'Grandpa, we will go in your horse carriage tomorrow and visit our farmlands. Mother Earth there has been praying Me eagerly from many days, "Lord Srīpadā, will You not make me holy with the touch of Your feet? You have the title of saviour of the suffering. Is it not?"'

"Then Srī Varma said, 'My dear Srīpadā, I have a small request. We have our lands near Srī Pīthikapuram. I want to form a village there and have the fields cultivated by those villagers. I want to give those lands to the villagers for a low rate of lease. I would like to appoint Your father as the village official to supervise the affairs of that estate. Your family does not have the village official post for Ayinavilli now. Is it not?' Srīpāda laughingly said, 'Grandfather, you thought about your village office, but you did not think about My office. This is not acceptable to Me. First, you will ask Me to work as that village official. In such a case, the history will record only that Ghandikota Srīpāda Srīvallabha Raja Sarma was a mere official of a particular village, but My office extends over the whole universe. I keep My own accounts. Everyday crores[1] of heaps of punya, diamonds, and ornaments are expended. The purpose of My incarnation is to move the kundalini of the universe. Villages, towns, and holy places also have kundalinis in the same way as individuals. This secret yoga can only be understood by those who know the Sāndra Sindhu Veda. The kundalini of Pīthikapuram can be shaken only in the 33rd generation of Bāpanārya, Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti and Vatsavāyi families. Why hurry now? Make the best use of every moment of this great sacred opportunity that is fortunately available to you.' My dear Shankar Bhatt, Srī Narasimha Varma tried to keep Srīpāda in Pīthikapuram permanently in this way.

The glory of Srīpāda

"Ignorance of a high degree was in me. As Srīpāda declared that He was verily Srī Krishna Himself, I questioned out of ignorance in a jeering tone, 'Srīpadā, You are saying that You are Krishna. Then are You having eight wives and sixteen thousand gopikas in this incarnation also?' Then Srīpāda

1 Indian number; a crore corresponds to 10 millions.

said with a smile, 'My eightfold nature represents eight wives. My incarnation is the one with sixteen comprehensive potencies. Every minute powerful vibrations emanate in all ten directions from the body and mind of this divine supreme soul called Srīpāda Srīvallabha incarnation. In this manner 10 x 10 x 10 = 1000 vibrations get released each minute for each potency from My body, mind and ātma[1]. Like this, from out of the sixteen potencies, a total of 16,000 pulsations emanate each minute. All these are My sixteen thousand gopikas. In the previous incarnation, all of them took human form. In this incarnation, they remain formless but dynamic and vibrating.

"'There is nothing wrong even if My various forms of divinity are worshipped. It amounts to worshipping Me. One can adore My Shiva form, Vishnu form or Brahma form. Likewise, one can worship the different forms of God within Me. Several kinds of spiritual practices, different stages of progress by the spiritual seekers, and causes of time and action influence the evolution of life.' Srīpāda explained thus.

"Narasimha Varma had a vision of thirty-two forms of Narasimha. They were:

1. Kundapāda Narasimha Mūrthy
2. Kopa Narasimha Mūrthy
3. Divya Narasimha Mūrthy
4. Brahmānda Narasimha Mūrthy
5. Samudra Narasimha Mūrthy
6. Viswarūpa Narasimha Mūrthy
7. Vīra Narasimha Mūrthy
8. Krūra Narasimha Mūrthy
9. Bhībhatsa Narasimha Mūrthy
10. Rudra Narasimha Mūrthy
11. Dhūmra Narasimha Mūrthy
12. Vāni Narasimha Mūrthy
13. Vyāghra Narasimha Mūrthy
14. Bidala Narasimha Mūrthy
15. Bhīma Narasimha Mūrthy
16. Pātāla Narasimha Mūrthy
17. Akasha Narasimha Mūrthy

1 The self, the soul

18. Vakra Narasimha Mūrthy
19. Chakra Narasimha Mūrthy
20. Sankha Narasimha Mūrthy
21. Satwa Narasimha Mūrthy
22. Adbhutha Narasimha Mūrthy
23. Vega Narasimha Mūrthy
24. Vidarana Narasimha Mūrthy
25. Yogānanda Narasimha Mūrthy
26. Lakshmi Narasimha Mūrthy
27. Bhadra Narasimha Mūrthy
28. Raja Narasimha Mūrthy
29. Vallabha Narasimha Mūrthy.
    Later, he saw Srīpāda Srīvallabha as the
30. Narasimha Mūrthy,
    the incarnation of Srī Narasimha Saraswati as the
31. Narasimha Mūrthy
    and Swamī Samartha living in Srī Prajnapura[1] as the
32. Narasimha Mūrthy.

The story of Srīnivasa

"My dear one! Tomorrow is a very sacred day. It is the month of Kanya[2] and the star is Sravana[3]. *On Monday during dwadasi[4] and Siddha Yoga time, Srī Venkateswara[5] emerged as an adorable form. In the year Vilambi[6], during Vaisākha Suddha Saptami,[7] He obtained monetary assistance from Kubera*

1 City of Akkalkot in Maharashtra
2 Virgo
3 Nakshatra constellation in Aquarius
4 12th moon phase
5 A form of Vishnu; Lord Venkateswara took a loan for his marriage with Srī Padmavathi
6 Name of a year in the Hindu calendar
7 In the month of Vaisakha (or any other month), there are two fortnights each of fifteen days. Each day has a name signifying its day from the full moon. These names are repeated twice in a month. To differentiate between the ascending and the descending moon phase days, the prefix 'Suddha' is added to the ascending (waxing) moon phase days.

and executed a loan instrument. Srī Padmavati Devi[1] *was born in Mrigasira star*[2] *and Srīnivasa*[3] *was born in Sravana star. The marriage of Srīnivasa took place in the month of Vaisākha on Suddha Dasami*[4] *day in Uttara Phalguni star*[5]. Lord Srīnivasa also incarnated in the lineage of Bharadwaja. Akasa Maharaj was born to a snake nymph to Sudhanwa of the Pandava family. Thondaman was his brother. Vasudhanu was also a son of Akasa Raj. On the advice of sage Agastya, Lord Srīnivasa divided the kingdom equally to Vasudhanu and Thondaman." Thus spoke Subbayya Sreshti.

Subbayya Sreshti said to me, "Take rest today. We will chant the divine name of Srīpāda Srīvallabha all throughout the night. Tomorrow is a very sacred day according to the science of astrology. Tomorrow, I will narrate the extremely amazing sportive plays of Srīpāda. I will explain how Chintamani and Bilwa Mangala were brought to Pīthikapuram, how Srī Guru showed them mercy, how a village was built as a mark of the strange plays exhibited by Srīpāda in the fields of Srī Narasimha Varma, and how that village became famous by the name Chitrada. I will also explain in detail about the strange and peculiar things to happen in future times and about the sportive plays of Srīpāda before His final incarnation as Kalki." Having said that, he took me to a cottage nearby. There were two mats made of leaves of a date tree. Four dogs of high breed were standing guard to the cottage.

The fruits of meditation of Srīpāda

The divine plays of Srīpāda are not accomplished by others. They are appealing to the heart in a very happy manner. By simply remembering Him, heaps of sins amassed from many births will be burnt to ashes.

1 A form of Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and good fortune
2 Nakshatra-constellation in Taurus-Gemini
3 A name of Lord Venkateswara
4 10th ascending moon phase
5 Nakshatra-constellation in Leo-Virgo

Chapter 11

The Episode of Subbayya Sreshti, Chintamani and Bilwa Mangala

The worship of Datta will give the fruit of worship of all gods. The birth of Srīpāda — An extraordinary lustrous happening

Next day, Srī Subbayya Sreshti narrated like this, *"Lord Srī Datta is an embodiment of all deities. By worshipping Datta one can obtain the results of worshipping all deities. Srī Datta is inside all deities.* Mother Sumatī used to worship Parama Shiva in the nature of Anasuya during the time of Sani-pradosha[1]. Therefore, the intrinsic aspects of Shiva in Lord Datta reflected in the real nature of Anasuya and they took birth as Srīpāda in the womb of mother Sumatī, who was on an equal plane as mother Anasuya. It was a wonderful yogic exercise. *Srīpāda was not born out of the physical union of the parents. Yogic lights emerged from the eyes of Appalaraja Sarma and mother Sumatī who were in deep meditation. These lights combined and stayed in the womb of mother Sumatī.* After the completion of nine months, a brilliant form of light was delivered by mother Sumatī. By nature, Srīpāda was a personification of light. He was exhibiting some strange powers from His third year. After Srīpāda, three sisters, Srī Vidyadhari, Radha and Surekha, were born. On the day Srī Vidyadhari was born, a great scholar named Mallādi Ramakrishna Avadhāni, who was a distant relative of Srī Bāpanārya, came to their house. He had a son by the name of Chandra Sekhar. Mahalakshmi herself was born in the household of the Gandikota family as Srī Vidyadhari. All the relatives unanimously opined that it would be better if she became the daughter-in-law of Malladi family. Srīpāda also said that it would be better if His sister Srī Vidyadhari was given in marriage to Chandra Sekhar. The intentions of Srīpāda are accomplished without fail. His re-

1 Worship of Sani (the embodiment of Saturn) or Lord Shiva on Saturday evening

solve is as firm and strong as a hard diamond. In consonance with His words, the marriage of Srī Vidyadhari and Chandra Sekhara Avadhani was celebrated on a grand scale in Pīthikapuram in due course of time. Another sister, Radha, was given in marriage to Srī Viswanadha Muralikrishna Avadhani of Vijayawada and the third sister, Surekha, was married to Srī Tadepalli Dattatreya Avadhani of Mangalagiri.

"My dear Shankar Bhatt, the sportive actions of Srīpāda are unimaginable. There is a village called Tatankapur (Tanuku) in the Godavari region. There was a very pious family in that village that performed many great rituals like Vajapeya and Pundarika. The name of that family was Vajapeyajula. There were close connections between the Malladi family of Pīthikapuram and the Vajapeyajula family of Tanuku. However, the family of Vajapeyajula had faith in the principle of Idam Brahmyam, Idam Kshatram[1]. They belong to the lineage of Parāsara, comprising of three sages Vasishta, Sakthi and Parāsara. They followed Rig Veda. The Mallādi family follows Yajur Veda. There were no suitable teachers to teach Rig Veda to the youngsters studying it in the state of Karnataka. In that connection, when invited, Srī Vajapeyajula Māyanācharyulu from Tanuku migrated to Hoyasāla in Karnataka. From then on, they were called Hoyasāla Brahmins. They adopted the professions of Brahmins and Kshatriyas with equal ease. They underwent many difficulties to save Sanātana Dharma[2]. Māyanācharyulu had two sons. One was Mādhavācharya and the other was Sāyanāchārya. Both of them were scholars of very high caliber. Srī Sāyanāchārya wrote commentaries on Vedas. Srī Mādhavācharya undertook intense penance for the grace of Srī Lakshmi. When Srī Lakshmi appeared, he requested for the grant of extraordinary grace of Srī Lakshmi. Then Srī Lakshmi told him, 'My dear child, it is not possible for you in this present birth.' He immediately announced, 'Mother, I am taking to renunciation. Then it is a second birth for me. Is it not?' Srī Lakshmi bestowed him with abundant grace. With his touch, any metal used to turn into gold. After renuciation, he is known as Srī Vidyaranya Maharshi. Srīpāda blessed him. In his third generation in the lineage of ascetics, he will be born as Srī Krishna Saraswati. When Srīpāda incarnates as Narasimha Saraswati in the future, Srī Krishna Saraswati will be His guru for initiat-

1 Both Brahmanic culture and valour of Kshatriyas
2 The eternal Law

ing Him into the ascetic order. As his desire for wordly pleasures did not fully abate, he would be born in the future centuries in the family of Sāyanāchārya with the name of Govinda Dikshitulu. In that life, he would become the chief minister to the rulers of Tanjore and will be praised by all people as rājarshi[1]. This is all a prediction for the future. This is the course of destiny as personally decided by Srīpāda. His resolve will always become true. Therefore, this prediction about the future will certainly take place.

"When different deities are worshipped, the life force of Lord Datta replicates in those deities. It will transform into a new consciousness and fulfill the desires of spiritual seekers. If Lord Datta is worshipped, He decides the extent to which a particular task is to be performed by an aspect of a particular deity and thus He protects His devotees like an eyelid protects the eye. Once, Dhruva undertook a rigorous penance for the grace of Srī Maha Vishnu. Srī Maha Vishnu granted him His boundless paternal affection. When Dhruva took birth in Kali Yuga, he instructed his followers to seek the infinite love and forgiveness of the Lord. Christ arrived to transmit the infinite love and forgiveness of the Lord. Lord Srī Datta is a supreme phenomenon. He is the basis for and also beyond both form and formless natures. That is His ultimate real nature. That is the primordial nature that has no beginning nor end. The true nature of Datta can be realized only through experience, and it is utterly futile to contemplate about it with logical intellect. The secret of the incarnation of Srīpāda Srīvallabha is His encompassing ability to direct a specific task to be done or not done or done in a different way.

The nature of Srīpāda

"Srīpāda, who announced that He was none other than Dattatreya, was worshipping Kālagni Shamana Datta[2] in His house. Once Bāpanārya wondered about this and asked Srīpāda 'My boy Srīpadā, are you Datta or a worshipper of Datta?' Then He replied, 'I become Datta when I say I am Datta. When I say I am a worshipper of Datta, I become a worshipper of

1 A saint king
2 One of the sixteen avatars of Lord Dattatreya, as the fire of time

Datta. When I aver I am Srīpāda Srīvallabha I become Srīpāda Srīvallabha. Whatever I think, I become that. This is My nature.'

"This was all very confusing to the grandfather. Then Srīpāda said, 'Grandfather, both of us are one! In the ensuing birth, I am going to incarnate with a body that closely resembles you. You have a very strong desire to enter the ascetic order. It is not My resolve that you should be a monk in this life or in the next life. I want to incarnate with a body resembling you exactly in all respects and destroy all your karmic shackles and influences.' Saying so, He gently touched the centre-point of the eyebrows – the focal point of consciousness – of His grandfather. Srī Bāpanārya saw for some seconds Babajī, who was in a state of undisturbed trance of meditation in the Himalayas. After some time, he saw him taking a bath in the confluence of Triveni[1] in the great pilgrimage centre Prayāga[2]. He saw the form of Srīpāda afterwards. Then that image merged with the self-existent Datta in the Kukkuteswara temple[3]. An avadhūta[4] came out of it. He saw that his daughter Akhanda Lakshmi Sowbhagyavati Sumatī Maharani was giving alms to that avadhūta. He again saw that the avadhūta took the shape of Srīpāda Srīvallabha and was lying in the lap of Sumatī Maharani. He observed that the little kid came out of her lap and changed into a youth of sixteen years. That youngster saw him with profound looks and took a form exactly resembling him. However, that person appeared like an ascetic. That ascetic was walking majestically with His disciples after taking a bath in the confluence of two sacred rivers. That ascetic glanced towards him and spoke, 'Oh, you appear to be discussing within yourself as to who I am. I am called Narasimha Saraswati. This is Gandharvapura.' Within minutes after speaking these words, the ascetic threw His upper garment into the river, sat on it and reached SrīShaila. Great people and great yogis in Kadali Vana prostrated before Him. All of them prayed, 'Great Lord, we have all been doing penance for many hundreds of years for your advent. Kindly make us blessed.' After undertaking penance for many years, He appeared as an aged person with only a loincloth on Him. With His extremely sharp looks towards Srī Bāpanārya, He said that He is called Swamī Samartha.

1 The confluence of three rivers
2 Today Allahabad
3 Temple in Pithapuram mainly dedicated to Lord Shiva
4 Persons liberated from karmic bondages, beyond ego-consciousness and duality

After some time, He relinquished that body and transferred His life force to a banyan tree and merged His divine soul in the Mallikarjuna Shiva linga at SrīShaila. From that highly powerful Shiva linga a profound thundering voice was thus heard, 'Bāpanāryā, you are indeed fortunate! I am unobtainable, imperceptible to speech and mind, infinite, a total embodiment of wisdom and without beginning or end. By the power of your kriya yoga[1] you have brought Me from the solar region through shaktipāta and attracted Me into this jyotir linga[2]. Eighteen thousand celestials will worship Me in the form of this jyotir linga for eternity. Those holy celestials will assist the people who adore this jyotir linga in their material and spiritual progress. As a personification of the Trinity, I am blessing you with My forms of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, Narasimha Saraswati and Swamī Samartha.'

"My dear Shankar Bhatt, the sportive plays of Srī Guru are unimaginable. After some time, Srī Bāpanārya became his normal self. He saw Srīpāda as a boy aged three years with an innocent face smiling sweetly, facing him. This strange experience gave him heavenly sweetness. He hugged Srīpāda. For some time, he was in a state of divine ecstasy. From that supernatural experience he returned to the normal state and started the fire ritual. The way in which he typically performed the fire ritual was amazing. Generally, fire is generated by using sticks of an audumbara and Jammi tree, but Srī Bāpanārya used to chant Vedic mantras after placing the holy samidhas[3] in the fire altar. Fire used to get generated and flames used to shoot. Srī Appalaraja Sarma also used to do the fire ritual like that. The worship of fire was there in their family. On special sacred days, they used to get down into the burning altar of fire and offer oblations. They used to not experience any harm to their body or clothes in this kind of fire worship. This is a wonder of wonders.

Srīpāda's capacity to make things happen or not happen

"On that day during the fire ritual, the fire did not get generated in spite of Srī Bāpanārya chanting Vedic mantras many times. Seeing the difficult

1 An ancient yoga technique
2 A symbol of Shiva; jyoti means radiance and linga means the image or sign; jyotir linga means, the radiant sign of the Almighty.
3 Twigs used during sacrifices

condition of His grandfather, Srīpāda smiled sportively. The grandfather was sweating profusely. Then Srīpāda turned towards the fire pit and said, 'Agni devā, I am commanding you. Do not create an obstruction to grandfather's divine work.' Immediately, the fire ignited and flames rose. Srīpāda took some water from His grandfather's water pot and poured it into the fire. Instead of getting extinguished, the fire began to burn very brightly. Seeing this, the grandfather was much more wonderstruck. Srīpāda averred like this, 'Grandfather, you, Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti, and Narasimha Varma are responsible for My incarnation as Srīpāda. Therefore, when you or My father receive any monetary or non-monetary assistance from Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti, or Narasimha Varma, it cannot be counted as a donation. Non-acceptance of such an offer will be considered as an offence against God. Such an assistance has to be regarded as the grace of the Almighty. My mother Sumatī Maharani should not only be treated as the daughter of the Malladi family, but also of Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti and Srī Vatsavāyi's families. This is My edict.' Appalaraja Sarma and Sumatī Maharani were present there when Srīpāda declared this. By chance, Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti and Narasimha Varma were also present there. Srīpāda said, *'Without My will even a great hermit like Srī Bāpanārya cannot generate fire. The Fire god will show his power when My father gets into the fire place. If there were to be a change in My intention, Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti will turn into a very poor person, and Narasimha Varma, who is the owner of many acres of land, will become shelterless. It is only with My intention that all of you remain in the current positions. I can make a beggar to be a king and I can change a king to be a beggar also. I will fulfill all the wishes of My devotees who surrender to Me. However, I will examine before granting whether that devotee can retain such elevated state and whether he will use his capacity and power for the welfare of the world. Whenever I find it necessary, I will turn earth into sky and sky into earth also.* In Krita Yuga, when Bāpanārya was living as Lābhāda Maharshi, he had a disciple named Mangala Maharshi. Once, when Mangala Maharshi was cutting sacred grass, his hand got wounded and blood flowed out of his wounded hand. That blood coagulated and turned into fragrant holy ash. He felt proud in his mind that he achieved such a great accomplishment. Then Shiva appeared and moved His hand playfully. A great quan-

tity of holy ash showered as if mountain boulders from the Himalayas were falling apart. Shiva said, "In Tretā Yuga, sage Bharadwaja will perform Sāvitru Kathaka Chayana in Pīthikapuram. I showed you only a fraction of the holy ash that will accumulate in that great sacrifice." Then the pride of Mangala Maharshi was removed.' All the listeners were dumbfounded and were hearing all that Srīpāda was saying. Srīpāda said, *'One steps into this Pīthikapuram only on account of the good merits earned over many births. It is of unspeakable significance that you are with Me during the period of My incarnation. To experience My power, you must first become a rigorous spiritual seeker. Then only you will experience My power, compassion, affection, protection and redemption from sin. My pādukas will be installed in the house of Srī Bāpanārya, which is My birthplace. I will drink milk in the morning in Pīthikapuram in the lap of My mother Sumatī. In the afternoon, mother Sumatī will feed Me with little lumps of food. During night time, I will eat halwa*[1] *in the lap of Mother Sumatī. I will remain in Gandharvapura in the form of Narasimha Saraswati just as I am in Pīthikapuram. I will seek bhiksha*[2] *in Gandharvapura exactly during midday. These will be clearly seen by those who have the sight of inner eye.*

"Great personages, great yogis and people of all countries will come to My darbār to have My dārshan, like rows of ants. They will dance in ecstasy, chanting "Datta Digambarā, Srīpāda Vallabha Digambarā, Narasimha Saraswati Datta Digambarā!" The moment I give permission, all due tasks will be done at once. A great samsthan will be formed in My name. As My influence enhances, it will become difficult to purchase even a small patch of land, as small as the foot of a cow, in this Pīthikapuram. If necessary, I will drag people whom I consider as My own to Pīthikapuram by holding their hair. Without My will one cannot come to My Samsthan in Pīthikapuram, however rich he might be or however great yogi he might be. This is confirmed and true. Be happy by realising My real nature. This time will not come again. The powers of all gods whom a man can think of are within Me. If anyone gives dakshina to Me, I will multiply it hundredfold and grant him good merit when the appropriate time comes. Money has to be earned without violating dharma.

1 Sweet preparation with wheat flour
2 Donation of food or money

Desires can be satisfied without violating dharma. By doing righteous acts, moha is destroyed. After moha is destroyed, liberation is achieved.'

"My boy Shankar Bhatt, did you hear all these nectar-like words of Srīpāda? After this sacred teaching, Narasimha Varma took Srīpāda in his horse carriage the next day to see his fields. He had many acres of agricultural lands. Many varieties of crops were grown in those fields, but luffa plants were rarely flowering. After flowering the tender vegetable was drying up. If some became big, they were bitter and not fit for cooking. Narasimha Varma submitted this matter to Srīpāda. Srīpāda became placid-faced and said, "All the members of our household like luffa curry made with dal. As the people in My house like it, I too like it. In ancient times, an aspirant of Datta undertook penance in this land. This holy Earth is yearning for the touch of My feet as I am verily Datta. It is expressing its eagerness to you in its language in this manner. When this Earth receives My touch there will be change in the nature of this Mother Earth. After that, this earth will give us very tasty luffa. Grandfather, send the luffa grown here to our house without any fear. I will eat that preparation of curry along with the members of this house.' My dear Shankar Bhatt, wonder of wonders! From that day onwards, there was an abundant crop of luffa in that field. They also had a very good taste.

"Srīpāda got down from the horse carriage along with Narasimha Varma and roamed in the fields for some time. In the meanwhile, some tribal young men and women came there. All of them prostrated before Srīpāda. At that time, a divine illuminating halo formed around the divine countenance of Srīpāda. Srīpāda said, 'Grandfather, all these tribals belong to My incarnation of Narasimha. These people regard Mahalakshmi as their sister and worship Her. You are a devotee of Narasimha Swamī. If you take their help, you may obtain the dārshan of Lord Narasimha.'

"Narasimha Varma thought that Srīpāda spoke like that playfully to tease him. He then responded by saying, 'You chenchu people (forest tribals), have you seen Lord Narasimha? Can you tell about His whereabouts?' For that they replied, 'What is so great about it! A mad person with a lion's head and human body is roaming in these forests. He is infatuated with our sister Chenchulakshmi. Our girl also likes Him. We married them both. If you want, we will bring Chenchulakshmi and Narasimha also and place them before you.'

"After speaking like this those chenchu youths ran away quickly. Narasimha Varma was seeing all this with wonder. Then he observed that a young man and a young woman were coming across their fields. Fortunately, I was also going that way. Srīpāda beckoned me to come near Him. When I approached Him, Srīpāda told me, 'Subbayya Sreshtī, whom do you think are those people coming from a distance? They are Bilwamangala and Chintamani. Collect some tree twigs. We will make fire with them. We can see the farce.'

"Narasimha Varma and I started perspiring profusely. Those visitors were indeed Bilwamangala and Chintamani. There was no doubt. They visited Srī Krishna in the pilgrim centre Guruvayur. Fortunately, they later visited a great yogini Kurūramma. She blessed them involuntarily that they will get the dārshan of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. Under the influence of her blessing, the seeds of devotion and detachment sprouted in them. They visited Srī Narasimha in Mangalagiri and from there they were coming to Pīthikapuram to have the dārshan of Srīpāda. Both of them prayed in Mangalagiri thus, 'If the blessing of great Yogini Kurūramma were to fructify and we receive the dārshan of Srīpāda, who is not different from Datta, we request for your physical dārshan as Srī Narasimha Deva.' On account of the efficacy of the blessing of that centenarian great lady, who was a great yogini, they obtained the dārshan of Srīpāda here. This was a wonderful matter.

"When the fire of broken twigs was raging, Bilwamangala and Chintamani felt immense agony as if their bodies were put on a funeral pyre. After some time, some black shapes closely resembling them came out of their bodies and fell into the flames and they cried bitterly. When the two black images were completely burnt down, Bilwamangala and Chintamani regained their consciousness. By that time the forest tribals came there with their sister Chenchulakshmi. They tied tightly the hands of Lord Narasimha and produced Him before Srīpāda.

"Such wonderful and strange things did not take place in any yuga. In the programme of Srīpāda's incarnation miracles and sportive plays were countless and unimaginable. Srīpāda questioned like this, 'Are you the Narasimha of bygone aeons? Is this Chenchulakshmi your wife? Are you the one who killed Hiranyakasipu and protected Prahlada?' For that, Lord Narasimha replied 'Yes' three times. Chenchulakshmi and Lord Narasimha

merged in the body of Srīpāda in the form of a brilliant light. Chintamani transformed to be a great yogini. The tribals disappeared. Bilwamangala became a great devotee and came to be known as Bilwamangala Maharshi. *Srīpāda announced that in the lands of Srī Narasimha Varma where all these strange and weird incidents happened, a village by the name of Chitrawada would come about. His will is truth. His will prevails."*

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Chapter 12

Story of Kula Sekhara

As Subbayya Sreshti explained many new things clearly and as I started understanding, I found that I was getting confidence. Subbayya Sreshti began to narrate in this manner, "Srīpāda Srīvallabha is actually Srī Venkateswara Swamī Himself! At the end of Kali Yuga[1], Srīpāda Srīvallabha will come again in the incarnation Kalki. Brahmins generally say that Kali Yuga runs for 432,000 years, but according to Sāndra Sindhu Veda[2], after a lapse of 5,000 years in Kali Yuga, a common deluge takes place and Satya Yuga will be established." There was no end to my astonishment. What Sreshti was saying ran quite contrary to what I heard from the Brahmins.

The relationship between breath and longevity

Subbayya Sreshti answered by saying, "My dear Shankar Bhatt, in the Kali Yuga the sub-period of Kali ends after 5,000 years. After that, there will be a transitory period. Then in Kali Yuga, the sub-period of Satya Yuga will start. Even though the total length of Kali Yuga is 432,000 years, there are sub-periods, subtle periods and other fractional periods in it. This is well understood by those who know yoga sāstra[3]. *Suppose God Brahma decided 120 years as the life span of a certain individual. It does not mean that he will physically live for 120 years. It only means that he is given a period equal to the span of time during which one can inhale and exhale air in a normal state in 120 years.* People with an unstable mind, angry people, those who rush to do things, those who live daily

1 Dark age
2 A mystical Sanskrit work written on palm leaves dealing with time and the incidents of the future
3 The science of yoga

with sorrow, those with bad tendencies will spend away their life breaths in a short time. The giant tortoise which takes a smaller number of breaths lives for 300 years. The monkey, which has an exceedingly unstable nature, dies within a short period. The correct anatomical structure must be in place for the proper inhalation and exhalation. *Yogis inhale air, retain it and circulate it inside the organs of the body. By this, many breaths are saved and they live for a long period.* The life cells in the body of men are currently undergoing an evolutionary process.

The result of devoted reading of Srīpāda Charitāmrutam

"The parts of the body of today are not the same as they were ten years ago. New life cells are generated in place of the old life cells. In the same way, the life force undergoes many changes. Life giving new life force gets generated, and life force is destroyed when ill or old. In the same way, the mental power also undergoes many changes. Old ideas change or get destroyed and new ideas crop up. The mental power that is newly born has the capacity to attract divine power and divine grace. Through this, the mind is purified, the life force is purified, and the body is also purified. *Books like Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam are actually embodiments of the Almighty. Forces of siddha and yoga internally exist in every letter of Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam. If such a book is read mentally or vocally or by the coordination of the mind and voice, the divine mental consciousness of Srīpāda would be attracted towards that direction. All vibrations related to the physical, vital and mental illnesses as well as the troubles and difficulties of the devotees who have made a devoted study of this book, reach the mental consciousness of Srīpāda. There they will get purified and return to the aspirant with vibrations filled with grace of the divine. Under such circumstances an aspirant derives comforts of this and the other worlds.*

The result of offering food to good people

"After a devoted reading[1] of the book, food should be offered to at least eleven good people, or an amount of money equivalent to that expenditure should be arranged for utilisation in Datta kshetras. Then only the complete fruits of the devoted reading will be obtained. *The devotee would get longevity by offering food to good people. It means that the quantity of food sufficient for him for some more years will be generated in an imperceptible manner for the devotee. Not only that. When the good people that are offered food are satisfied, the vibrations of gratification and yoga relating to peace, strength, satisfaction and wealth would emanate from the imperceptible.* In the course of time, the seeds thus originated will flourish as great trees. *Srī Krishna, who simply accepted one grain of boiled rice from mother Draupadi, could provide ample food to sage Durvasa and his ten thousand disciples. Therefore, it should be understood that all that is offered to Srī Guru with devotion and care will remain in the imperceptible regions in a seed form. In the course of time, those seed forms will grant all the necessary comforts and wealth to the aspirant.*

"Once Srī Krishna and Sudhāma went to the forest to collect sacred grass. As Srī Krishna was tired, He slept on the lap of Sudhāma. Sudhāma was eating the flattened rice brought from the ashram without the knowledge of Srī Krishna. Srī Krishna, who feigned sleep, woke up and said, 'Sudhāma, I am hungry. Did not the wife of our guru give food to us to assuage our hunger while coming from the house?' Sudhāma replied in the negative. Krishna again said, 'It appears you are munching something.' Sudhāma said, 'Nothing. I am only reciting Vishnu Sahasranāma.' Krishna again said, 'Oh, is it so? I got a dream that the wife of our guru[2] gave flattened rice for both of us and that you are eating alone without giving to me.' Then Sudhāma said, 'Srī Krishna, You are tired. That too, this is day time. Scriptures say that day dreams will have no effect.' Srī Krishna laughed and kept quiet. After some time, Sudhāma became Kuchela[3] and

1 Here: Pārāyana
2 Here: Guru-patni
3 Kuchela is a title given to Sudhāma; the meaning of the word is "one who is hardly clothed"

became very poor. He recited Vishnu Sahasranāma many times praying for the redressal of his grievances. At last, he received the mercy of Srī Krishna. He accepted flattened rice from Kuchela and granted him abundant wealth. As Kuchela kept Srī Krishna's head in his lap when tired, Srī Krishna made Kuchela lie on the bed made with soft feathers of swan and pressed his feet. The mysterious principle of karma is thus enlightened by the Lord.

Wrecking the pride of a wrestler

"When Srīpāda was four years old, a Malayalī[1] wrestler who learnt a secret art called marmakala[2] came to Pīthikapuram. His name was Kula Sekhara. The life centres controlling several parts of our body are called marmas. If the marmas[3] are touched or hit upon, a person can be rendered unconscious, or any part of the body can be immobilized and physical disability can be brought about. This art should be used to cure people suffering in those centers or to prevent symptoms of diseases. Besides this martial art, some special marmas are called adangals. The marma treatment is the medical art that teaches how to treat issues with adangal marmas. Susruta is the ancient physician who first revealed this science to the world. This art focuses on the twelve extremely dangerous marma centres that exist. These arts are to be learnt from a guru and should be used only for the welfare of the world. Life force abounds in these marma centres. By exerting terrible pressure on them, or by striking on them, the life of a person can be endangered. By exerting pressure on certain points, not only one can be rescued from danger to life, but various kinds of chronic diseases can also be cured. Kula Sekhara was a devotee of the Lord of the Seven Hills. He was defeating all wrestlers in all kingdoms and was receiving victory flags. He came to Pīthikapuram in due of time. There were wrestlers in Pīthikapuram as well. They all assembled and concluded that they would certainly receive a death-blow in the hands of Kula Sekhara and that the prestige of their town wrestlers would be destroyed. It is well known that sages have many strange pow-

1 Person from Malayalam speaking region, the modern Kerala
2 South Indian martial art
3 Pressure points

ers. People who know say that Srīpāda Srīvallabha is an incarnation of Srī Dattatreya. They wanted to seek His refuge to solve this difficult problem. At that time, Srīpāda was in the house of Srī Narasimha Varma. Srī Narasimha Varma got a silver-laced turban specially prepared for Srīpāda. It was his habit to adorn Srīpāda with the silver-laced turban and take Srīpāda along with him in the horse carriage while visiting his estate lands for supervision. One day when the turban was about to be worn, Srīpāda asked Srī Narasimha Varma to wait for some time.

"In the meantime, the wrestlers of Pīthikapuram came there. They sought the refuge of Srīpāda. Srīpāda gave them assurance. In Pīthikapuram, there lived a hunch-back named Bhīma. His body was extremely twisted. Moreover, he was weak. Srī Narasimha Varma used to pay him a salary by using his services even though he could not do any work. Bhīma had boundless love, affection and an unfaltering faith towards Srīpāda. He often requested Srīpāda to rectify his hunchback. Srīpāda used to tell Bhīma that He would set it straight at the appropriate time. Srīpāda said, 'Why should we fear that wrestler? We have Bhīma. He can face Kula Sekhara. When a person like Bhīma is behind us, why should we fear?'

"The ways of Datta are very strange and queer. The citizens of Pīthikapuram wondered at the selection of Bhīma for fighting with Kula Sekhara. Some people thought that either Bhīma would die in the fight, or that the divinity of Srīpāda would come to light. A wrestling ring was arranged in the vicinity of the Kukkuteswara temple. Many people came there to witness the entertainment. The duel started. The body of Bhīma was getting strengthened with every blow that was dealt by Kula Sekhara. Kula Sekhara was receiving blows in those areas upon which he struck Bhīma. Kula Sekhara became weak. Bhīma's hunchback was set right and he also became a very strong person.

"Kula Sekhara prostrated at the feet of Srīpāda. Srīpāda said, 'Kula Sekharā, there are 108 marmas in the human body. You had complete knowledge about them, but Bhīma completely relied on Me. He had the knowledge that I am his protector. Is your knowledge great or his knowledge great? You swayed with arrogance. I enjoy divine entertainment. I am the law and I am the enforcer who can impose varieties of punishment. From today on, I am passing the weakness of Bhīma onto you. May you live as a weakling! However, you will live without any paucity of food

and clothing. Let Bhīma take all the life force from your body and remain as a sturdy person. I am the strongest living being in the world. Am I not there in Tirupati? While seeking My protection, you misused this art of marma. Therefore, I am withdrawing this art of marmas from you.'

"Srīpāda granted vision as Srī Padmavati-Venkateswara for a moment and gratified him. The divine acts of Srīpāda are incomprehensible and unthinkable. Obtaining His grace is the only proper way for us." Thus concluded Subbayya Sreshti.

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Chapter 13

The Account of Ananda Sarma

After taking permission from Subbayya Sreshti, I continued my journey towards Kuruvapuram. I reached a village by nightfall. I was thinking as to which house I should go to collect alms of food. I saw a Brahmin seated comfortably on the verandah of his house and talking to the people nearby. His eyes were very bright. Compassion was flowing from his eyes. He invited me cordially into his house and offered me meals. After I finished the meals, he began to tell me, "My dear, I am called Ananda Sarma. I devotedly practice the Gayatri mantra. A short while ago, Mother Gayatri appeared to my inner eye and told me that a devotee of Datta will be arriving here. She asked me to offer that visitor sumptuous meals and that I would derive good merit as if I saw Lord Datta himself. Everything took place as told by Her. I am extremely happy."

I told him, "Sir, I am only a devotee of Datta. Having heard that Lord Datta is presently moving on Earth under the name of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, I am going to Kuruvapuram to have His dārshan. My name is Shankar Bhatt. I am a Brahmin from Karnataka."

The description of the hermitage of Sage Kanva

Ananda Sarma laughed on hearing my words. He said, "Sir, an avadhūta came to our house at the time my father was performing my thread ceremony[1]. My people extended all services to him. He explained many matters relating to the practice of the Gayatri mantra. He directed us to visit Lord Narasimha's temple in Penchalakona[2]. My father took me to Penchalakona[3]. After seeing Lord Narasimha's temple there, my father was un-

1 Upanayanam
2 Bruhatsila Kona
3 A very old pilgrimage centre in the area of Nellore, Andhra Pradesh

expectedly absorbed in meditation. That meditation went on for many days and nights. I was afraid. I became hungry. A stranger gave me food. He took me through impenetrable forest paths into some hilly caves. He then disappeared. I saw an old hermit in that cave. His eyes were like blazing fire balls. He was being served by 101 sages. That old hermit said that he was Kanva Maharshi and that the area was his land of penance and that his disciples, though they appeared young, were thousands of years old. He added that on account of the great merit earned by seeing Lord Datta in avadhūta form, I could come to that land of penance[1]. With astonishment and great delight, I was experiencing, I could not speak, and my body was shivering. Then Sage Kanva said, 'Lord Datta is now in the form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha in Pīthikapuram. Do convey our request to the Lord to kindly take care of us. May you have the dārshan of Srīpāda Srīvallabha at the earliest!' He blessed thus and placed his sacred hand on my head. I was transported back to my father in a trice. After my father came back to normalcy, we went back to our village. I did not disclose to my father my experience in the ashram of Sage Kanva or the fact that the new incarnation of Lord Datta was in Pīthikapuram.

The holy kshetra Pattisāchala near Rajahmundry

"Time was passing by. Due to the efficacy of the blessing of Sage Kanva, I was getting a vision of the pādukas[2] of Srīpāda Srīvallabha in my meditation. Once, some relatives came to our house. They had a desire to take a bath in holy rivers and visit holy pilgrim centres. They wanted my father to accompany them. I was ten years old at that time. My father was very fond of me. So, he asked me to come along with him. I agreed. Rajamahendravaram city[3] is on the banks of the river Godavari. On the hills situated north of Rajamahendravaram, some sages were doing penance. Some more sages were undertaking penance on the hills located on the eastern side.

1 Here: Tapobhūmi
2 Sandals worshipped as holy
3 Today: Rajahmundry

"Holy Pattisāchala kshetra[1] is in the midst of the river Godavari and is situated at a distance from Rajamahendravaram. During Maha Shivarātri[2], some of these sages used to recite Vedic hymns in Pattisāchala kshetra and in Koti Linga kshetra of Rajamahendravaram. All these sages who were coming from the east, west, north and south directions used to meet in the midway in a village called Yedurulapalli. They used to take rest in a village called Munikūdali, which was very near to Yedurulapalli village. There they used to engage in mutual discussions. On account of my good fortune, I could visit the Munikūdali village along with my father. All this was the divine play of Lord Srī Datta.

Srīpāda Srīvallabha is the first and foremost incarnation of Srī Dattatreya in Kali Yuga

"Most profound philosophical matters, scriptures of yoga sāstra and astrological subjects came for discussion there. All the great sages who participated in those discussions unanimously declared that *Lord Srī Datta took incarnation under the name of Srīpāda Srīvallabha in Pīthikapuram, and His is the first and foremost comprehensive incarnation of Lord Datta in Kali Yuga*[3]*.They also said that those who cannot see Him physically could see Him in their hearts through the processes of meditation and that this incarnation was extremely peaceful and completely filled with compassion.*

"Then my father took me to Pīthikapuram. The group of scholars who accompanied us took a bath in the Pādagaya tīrtha[4] and visited and worshipped various deities in the Kukkuteswara temple. From there, they proceeded to the house of Srī Bāpanārya while chanting Vedic hymns. Srī Bāpanārya and Srī Appalaraja Sarma met us along with their group of scholars, chanting Vedic hymns. It was a very enchanting spectacle. It is impossible to witness such divine and beautiful scene unless one had the credit of the fruits of good deeds performed in past lives.

1 Today: Pattiseema
2 Festival in reverence to Lord Shiva
3 Dark age
4 Thīrtha: Place of pilgrimage associated with sacred water; Pādagaya Thīrtha: the place where the feet of the asura (demon) Gaya fell

Description of the divine and auspicious form of Srīpāda

"Then a feast was arranged for all of us in the house of Srī Bāpanārya. *By that time, the age of Srīpāda Srīvallabha did not exceed five years. In this milky tender age, the divine child was very bright, lustrous, handsome and tall. Infinite love and mercy were flowing from His eyes as a big stream. When I touched His holy feet, He placed His assuring hand on my head and blessed me. He blessed me (Ananda Sarma) saying, 'My grace will be on you in this and all succeeding births. In your final birth, you will become an avadhūta under the name Venkayya. May you shine well by constantly keeping a sacrificial fire; you will be capable of bringing rain during drought and will also be capable of removing the worldly problems of householders!'"* Ananda Sarma thus concluded.

Then I asked Ananda Sarma, "The more I hear the divine plays of Srīpāda, they appear more and more strange and peculiar. Kindly tell me the secrets of the devoted pursuit of the Gayatri mantra."

The description of the efficacy of all the letters of Gayatri mantra

Ananda Sarma explained, "The Gayatri Shakti is a power pervading all the universe. If you establish a relationship with that power, the subtle nature will come under your control. With this, all the treasures connected with body, mind and soul can be obtained. When the nerves join together, that group centre of nerves is called a grandhi[1]. Different forces are concentrated in the various grandhis of the body. When the mantras are chanted by those who are adepts in japa yoga,[2] the forces lying concentrated in grandhis can be manifested.

- *Aum*
  When this is chanted, power will raise in an area 6 inches[3] above the head;

1 A knot
2 Repetition of the name of God
3 1 inch = 2.54 cm

- *Bhū*
  When this is chanted, power will raise in an area 4 inches above the right eye;
- *Bhuvaha*
  When this is chanted, power will raise in an area three inches above the third eye of the person;
- *Svaha*
  When this is chanted, power will raise in an area 4 inches above the left eye.

"These following seed words are to be uttered for the purposes described below:

Syllable No.	*Description*	*Sacred Words*
1	To awaken the sāphalya power embedded in the tāpini grandhi in the area of ājna chakra	Tat
2	To activate the parākrama power embedded in the saphalata grandhi in the left eye	Sa
3	To activate the pālana power concentrated in the viswa grandhi in the right eye	Vi
4	To rouse the mangala karam power concentrated in the tusthi grandhi in the left ear	Tūh
5	To achieve the yoga power enshrined in the varada grandhi in the right ear	Va
6	To achieve the prema power concentrated in the revati grandhi at the base of the nose	Re
7	To activate the ghana power lying in the sūshma grandhi in the upper lip	Ni
8	To activate the teja power lying in the gyana grandhi in the lower lip	Yam
9	To activate the rakshana power concentrated in the bharga grandhi in the throat	Bhar
10	To achieve the buddhi power concentrated in the gomati grandhi in the gullet	Go

11	To rouse the dhamanam power lying in the devika grandhi in the upper portion of the left chest	De
12	To rouse the nista power concentrated in the vārāhi grandhi located in the upper portion of the right chest	Va
13	To activate the dharana power concentrated in the simhini grandhi positioned in the place where the side ribs join in the upper portion of stomach	Sya
14	To activate the prana power concentrated in the dhyana grandhi of liver	Dhī
15	To activate the samyama power concentrated in the maryada grandhi in the spleen	Ma
16	To rouse tapo power concentrated in the sputa grandhi of the navel	Hi
17	To activate the power of dūrdarsita in the the medha grandhi located at the end of spinal cord	Dhī
18	To activate the antarnihita power concentrated in the yogamaya grandhi on the left shoulder	Yo
19	To rouse the utpadana power concentrated in the yogini grandhi of the right shoulder	Yo
20	To rouse the sarasata power concentrated in the dharini grandhi of the right forearm	Nah
21	To activate the adarsha power lying in the prabhava grandhi in the left forearm	Pra
22	To activate the sāhasa power lying in the ūshma grandhi of the right wrist	Cho
23	To rouse the viveka power concentrated in the drusya grandhi of the right palm	Da
24	To awaken the seva power concentrated in the niranjana grandhi of the left palm	Yāt

“In this way, there is a close connection between the twenty-four letters of the Gayatri mantra, the twenty-four grandhis located in the various areas of our body and the twenty-four forces concentrated in those grandhis.

Number nine indicates the changeless nature of Brahma[1]. Number eight indicates the nature of illusion[2].

Do Chapāthi dev Lakshmi — An explanation of that sentence

"Srīpāda used to accept two chapāthis[3] from the houses of those whom He liked. He was calling 'Do Chowpati dev Lakshmi' instead of 'Do Chapathi dev Lakshmi'. In this the 'Do' sound indicates number two. The 'Chow' sound indicates number four. The 'Pati dev' sound points to Parameswara[4], suggesting number nine and the 'Lakshmi' sound suggests the form of Māya indicated by number eight. *Therefore, the number 2498 is formed as a mysterious figure. Srīpāda used this number to indicate that He is Mother Gayatri, Paramatma and Parāshakti together."*

Then I said, "Sir, I understood to some extent as to what you told me about the twenty-four letters of the Gayatri mantra. You said that number nine represents Paramātma[5] and that number eight represents the phenomenon of Māya."

Explanation about the number nine

Ananda Sarma said, "Dear Shankar Bhatt, Paramatma is beyond this universe. He is not subjected to any changes. Number nine is a strange number. When nine is multiplied with one, the product comes as nine. Nine multiplied by two gives eighteen as the product. When one is added to eight, the total comes to nine. Likewise, 9 x 3 = 27 and 2 + 7 = again becomes nine. Likewise, when nine is multiplied by any number, the sum of the different numbers in that product will become only nine. In this way, number nine signifies the changeless supreme self.

1 Here: Brahmatattwa
2 Here: Māyatattwa
3 Cakes made of wheat flour
4 The highest Lord
5 Super-self / super soul

Explanation of Gayatri

"Not only that, the Gayatri mantra is like the celestial tree. The 'Om' in that incantation is the trunk that came out of the Earth. *By reciting Om, one can obtain the knowledge about the existence of God and the devotion towards God.* The trunk has developed into three branches as Bhū, Bhuva, and Svaha. Bhū is capable of imparting the knowledge of self. Bhuva suggests that the karma yoga is to be followed by the living beings when they hold a body. Svaha helps in maintaining equipoise amidst all pairs of opposites and attain the state of samādhi.

"From the branch Bhū, three sub-branches named Tat, Savitu, and Varenyam came out. Tat gives the wisdom of life to the individual, Savitu gives strength to the bodily being, and Varenyam helps man to transcend animal instincts and transform into a divine personality.

"From the branch Bhuva, three sub-branches namely Bhargo, Devasya, and Dhīmahi originated. Bhargo enhances purity. Devasya bestows super natural sight possible only for celestials. Dhīmahi improves good qualities.

"From the branch Svaha, three sub-branches namely Dhī Yo, Yonah, and Prachodayāt came out. Dhī Yo develops discrimination, Yonah develops restraint, and Prachodayāt develops spirit of service in all living creatures.

"Therefore, know that Gayatri — the celestial tree — has three branches and each branch has three sub-branches. *So, 2498 is a number which denotes Srīpāda Vallabha.* I have already explained to you the significance of digit nine in that number.

Explanation of number eight

"Number eight is of the nature of Māya. This is verily the nature of Mother Anagha[1]. Eight multiplied with one gives eight. Eight multiplied with two gives sixteen; in this, if one is added to six it gives seven. This is lesser than eight. If eight multiplied with three, twenty-four is derived; in this, if two is added to four it gives six which is lesser also than eight. Likewise, when eight is multiplied by any number, the sum of the differ-

1 The trinity of Lakshmi, Parvati and Saraswati

ent numbers in that product always becomes either equal to eight or less than eight. In this way, the attribute of re-treating the potency of all living beings in the Creation remains within the Universal Mother. The phenomenon of Māya has the power to devalue any person however great he is and show him to the world in that devalued state. *Srīpāda Srīvallabha is the personification of Mother Gayatri. He is Srī Datta in the company of His consort Anaghādevi. Those who worship Him with mind, speech and actions will fulfil all their desires.*

"In the early morning, Brahmi Shakti seated on a swan, in the afternoon Vaishnavi Shakti seated on an eagle[1] and in the evening Shambhavi Shakti[2] rode on a bullock dwell in Mother Gayatri. The presiding deity of Gayatri incantation is Savita Devi. As a result of Sāvitrukāthaka Chayanam performed by Sage Bharadwaja in Tretā Yuga in Pīthikapuram, Srīpāda Srīvallabha incarnated in Pīthikapuram. Savita Devi assumes the form of Rig Veda in the early morning. In the afternoon She takes the form of Yajur Veda. In the evening She will be in the form of Sama Veda, and take the form of Atharvana Veda during night. The Sun, who is visible to our eye, is only a symbol. When yogis attain the zenith of spiritual achievement, they can have a vision of the Brahma Yoni[3] in the shape of a triangle with great luminescence. Out of it, countless millions of brahmāndas[4] originate every moment. They are maintained and also destroyed every moment. In this fashion creation, sustenance and liquidation go on every moment. The force of Savita that creates, maintains and destroys these countless universes is called Savitri. Nevertheless, Gayatri and Savitri are inseparable. The fire used for burning corpses is called lohita. The fire used for cooking food is called rohita. In the same way, a great force is functioning as Gayatri and Savitri in the worldly and other-worldly states. In the process of evolution of the living creatures, there are many necessities relating to this world. All of them are fulfilled by the grace of Mother Savitri. The spiritual advancement of the living beings is achieved through the grace of the Mother Gayatri. A synthesis is required to enjoy

1 Garuda
2 Brahmi Shakti, Vaishnavi Shakti and Shambhavi Shakti: The 3 consorts of the 3 Logoi
3 The female reproductive aspect of Lord Brahma
4 Universes

all comforts and pleasures in this mundane world, and to experience the divine bliss of the liberated state in the other world. *Those who take refuge in the lotus Feet of Srīpāda will become fulfilled in both the worlds.* This is precisely the difference between the devotion towards Srī Datta and the devotion towards other Deities."

I felt that whatever Srī Ananda Sarma narrated was unique. Then I asked, "Great sir, you are very fortunate. I heard that Srīpāda would take the incarnation of Srī Narasimha Saraswati. I also heard that in that incarnation He would accept Srī Krishna Saraswati as preceptor. What a strange thing it is?"

Srī Ananda Sarma continued his narration, "The incarnation of God comes only for the sake of the devotees. On assuming a human form, He would practise and teach how a super human being should conduct Himself. The renunciation aspect had to be uplifted. If He wants to become an ascetic, a preceptor is required. That guru should be fully worthy and qualified. Out of millions, only one person would be worthy of being a preceptor to a person who is verily an incarnation. In the family where an incarnation of God is born, eighty generations of that family will acquire salvation. In that family, plenty of good merit would get accumulated. Similarly, the family of the person who acts as the guru of that person of incarnation will also be very pious. In Tanuku[1], a great person by the name of Māyanāchārya was born in the family of Vajapeyajula. Srimati was his wife. They were a pious couple. After some time, they were living in Mangalapuram[2] in the area of Nandi Kotturu. Mādhavā, Sayana and Bhoginath were born to them. Mādhavā became Vidyaranya to restore Sanātana Dharma[3]. The great Sage Bāpanārya drew power from the solar region and invested it in the SrīShaila Mallikarjuna maha linga[4]. In reality, the Srī Charan[5] of Srī Datta incarnated on Srī Mountain. The advent of the glorious feet of Srīpāda on the Srī Mountain was a wonderful thing. The name of the mountain was Srī. The holy feet of Srī Datta is Srī Charan. The

1 A town in Andhra Pradesh
2 A village in the district of Srikakulam in Andhra Pradesh
3 The eternal Law
4 Srī Bāpanārya had channelled the energy of the Sun with a special ritual into a Shiva linga at Srisailam called Srī Saila Mallikarjuna lingam making it a powerful deity in that area.
5 Prosperous feet

name of Srīpāda Srīvallabha is very appropriate for this modern incarnation of Srī Datta.

"There were relationships between the families of Bāpanārya and Māyanāchārya from many generations. People used to jokingly remark that a female child born in the Malladi house would be the daughter-in-law of Vājapeyajula family, and a female child born in Vājapeyajula family would be the daughter-in-law of the Malladi family. However, Bāpanārya did not give in marriage his daughter Sowbhagyavati Sumatī Maharani to the family of Vājapeyajula. *Inspired by fate, and on account of divine decision, Bāpanārya gave his daughter Akhanda Lakshmi Sowbhagyavati Sumatī Maharani in marriage to Ghandikota Appalaraja Sarma.*

"Lord Datta was born as Srīpāda Srīvallabha and to redeem Vājapeyajula family, who had blood-relationship with His maternal grandfather, attracted Mādhavāchārya towards Him. Affection for Srīpāda overflowed in Mādhavāchārya. Mādhavāchārya later became sage Vidyāranya. His disciple was Malayānanda and his disciple Devatīrthulu. His disciple was Yādavendra Saraswati and his disciple was Krishna Saraswati. Between Srī Vidyāranya and Srī Krishna Saraswati, there were three people in that teacher-student lineage. Srī Vidyāranya would be born as Krishna Saraswati and will be the preceptor of Srīpāda in His next incarnation. In the future, Srī Vidyāranya will take birth in the family of his brother Sāyanāchārya under the name of Govinda Dikshita. He will become a saint prince and will become the chief minister of Tanjore. This was the divine pronouncement of Srīpāda.

"Srīpāda was always speaking the truth. Once Sumatī Maharani was giving a bath to Srīpāda. Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti came there at that time. On seeing him, Srīpāda questioned, 'Grandfather, do we belong to the Markandeya lineage?' He did not reply but smiled at the sweet words of Srīpāda and their ironical meaning. In fact, Srīpāda belonged to the Bharadwaja lineage and Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti was from the Markandeya lineage. Srīpāda said in a veiled manner that He is the maternal grandson of Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti according to a mental perception. Mother Sumatī took some water after the bath, and blessed Srīpāda, 'May You live as long as Markandeya.' The life span of Markandeya was only sixteen years. With the grace of Shiva, he had an endless life span. Srīpāda indirectly suggested that He would stay with His parents only for sixteen years. After sixteen years of age, Markandeya abandoned

his home and became a long living hermit. Srīpāda also stayed with his parents for sixteen years and thereafter became a world preceptor. He repeatedly asserted that He would conceal His body, that His body will have eternal life and that He incarnated as the son of Anasuya and Atri in the past in the same form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, which was seen presently.

The different forms of Srīpāda

"Srīpāda used to externalise His yogic power and was appearing along with that yogic power and was granting dārshan in the female form. Only Lord Datta could bring out the kundalini force in this way in the form of a female. Bāpanārya, Rajamamba, the parents of Srīpāda, Narasimha Varma and his wife, the Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti couple and some others had a vision of the young couple aged sixteen years. His parents who wanted to marry them, however, met with disappointment. He had already indicated in the very first meeting with mother Sumatī as an avadhūta that He would grant them the vision of a divine couple. The avadhūta said to mother Sumatī, 'Mother, your son will be with you for only sixteen years. If you intend to get Him married, He will not heed to you. Moreover, He will abandon the house and leave. Therefore, conduct yourself according to His wishes.' *Srī Anagha*[1] *and Srī Datta are an ancient couple. They have no death or birth. They always revel in divine sportive plays. In the forms of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, Srī Narasimha Saraswati and Swamī Samartha remain as Ardhanārīswara*[2].

The fruits accruing from the worship for forty days and pārāyana of Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam

"This is a divine secret. There is a special significance to the incarnation of Srīpāda taking place on Ganesh Chaturdhi[3]. Labha was the son of Srī

1 The trinity of Lakshmi, Parvati and Saraswati
2 The half male and half female form of God
3 A festival in honour of Lord Ganesha, celebrated the 4th ascending moon phase in Virgo

Ganesha. During one kalpa[1] and yuga, he became famous as Lābhāda Maharshi. He was born as Nanda[2] at the time of incarnation of Srī Krishna. That Lābhāda was born as the maternal grandfather of Srīpāda at the time of the incarnation of Srīpāda. Srīpāda incarnated by keeping the attributes of Lord Vighnesa[3] steadily in His consciousness in order to ward off all obstacles in the way of His devotees. He was born in the star Chitra[4]. He disappeared in Kuruvapuram in the star Hasta[5], which is the twenty-seventh star from Chitra. Devotees of Srīpāda have to observe a vow for a mandala[6] to remove the undesirable effects in their horoscopes caused by the movement of the nine planets in the twenty-seven stars. If Srīpāda is worshipped for a mandala with care and devotion or if His hagiography is read devotedly during that period, all desires will be fulfilled. Mind, intellect, inclination and ego spread their individual vibrations and pulsations in all the ten directions. It means that their vibrations are broadcast separately in forty ways. If these vibrations in all the forty ways are arrested and diverted towards Srīpāda, they reach Srīpāda Srīvallabha consciousness. There, they are properly reformed and transformed to be prosperous vibrations and are returned to the aspirant. Then, all the righteous wishes of the spiritual seeker are achieved. My dear Shankar Bhatt, I came to know through inner perception that you would write the biography of Srīpāda. Generally, the pārāyana[7] books currently in the world contain the family details of the author. The description of your family details is unnecessary in the history of the Lord that you are writing. Meditate upon the Lord, install Srīpāda in your inner eye and write in a simple style so that it can be easily understood by all. Then whatever comes out of your writing instrument through the consciousness of Srīpāda will stand as truth. Books written with this sort of inspiration or mantras uttered in this manner of inspiration need not be subjected to the regulations of grammar or prosody. Some of the great devotees praised the Lord in their local language and with ordinary common words when they had the vision of the Almighty. They violated

1 An age
2 Step-father of Srī Krishna
3 A name of Ganesha
4 Nakshatra-constellation in the month of Aries
5 Nakshatra-constellation in the month of Libra
6 Forty days
7 Devoted reading of a book

even the common rules of grammar. Even then, those stotras[1] will have to be recited in that manner only. The desired result cannot be obtained if alterations are made to suit the rules of grammar. The strength of the Lord's grace remains in the words of the devotee, which pleases Him and thus He grants boons. When we recite those stotras with their original words, our consciousness quickly gets in touch with the divine consciousness. God is not pleased with externals. He is pleased with the inner feelings. An inner feeling is an eternal power. Please note it."

I said, "Sir, the conversation we had after lunch about Sadguru is very pleasing. Please tell me some more details about the incarnation of Srīpāda and make me blessed."

Ananda Sarma said, "Srīpāda is very intimate with the Malladi, Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti and Vatsavāyi families and He has a bond of indebtedness which cannot be explained through language. Those three families had lots of good merit, which was their strength. Therefore, Srīpāda was of the opinion that the refusal of His father to accept money or materials given by those three families would cause difficulties. In accordance with the wish of Srīpāda, Appalaraja Sarma and Sumatī Maharani were freely going to the houses of the Malladi, Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti and Vatsavāyi families, not only during festivals and important events, but also during normal times. On one festive day, Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti invited Appalaraja Sarma and his wife to his house. Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti kept Srīpāda on his lap and was rocking Him in a swinging cradle. Srī Sreshti was very serious on that day. There was a reason for that. There was a famous astrologer in Pīthikapuram. He studied astrology in Orissa. There was no evidence to show that his predictions had ever gone wrong. He could indicate very accurately the time of death of a particular person. He predicted that Sreshti would die from heart disease on a particular day at a particular hour and minute. He said that there was a close relationship between some herbs, planets, stars and some sacred trees and yogic rituals. He further added that he would give a good medicine and a talisman whereby the untimely death would be warded off. He advised Sreshti to remove Appalaraja Sarma and to choose him as the family priest. Sreshti rejected the suggestion. The astrologer made a vow that if his prediction

1 Prayers praising God

were to go wrong, he would have his head shaved and that he would parade on a donkey. This matter was submitted to Appalaraja Sarma and Srī Bāpanārya. Bāpanārya made the astrological calculations and indicated that the threat of untimely death would be nullified by the intervention of divine power. Appalaraja Sarma worshipped Kālagni Shamana[1] and gave that holy water as prasād[2]. Mother Sumatī, with a tranquil face, approached Sreshti, whom she considered as her paternal uncle. In the meantime, Sreshti had a pain in the heart and cried 'Mother!' Mother Sumatī, who was nearby, came running saying 'My son, have you called me?' She touched the heart of Sreshti with her divine, auspicious and prosperous hand. Srīpāda, who was in the lap of Sreshti, yelled loudly 'go'. There was a buffalo in the house of Sreshti. It immediately struggled violently and died in seconds. Sreshti was saved. This information went to the astrologer. He at once came running to the house of Sreshti. He inwardly felt very sad that his great prophecy went wrong in a trice.

"Srīpāda said to the astrologer, 'No doubt you are an astrologer. You made a lot of study. I don't deny it. Why should Sreshti have the fear of death when I, the light of all lights, am here? You need not shave your head and parade on a donkey. It is enough if you repent. Your father, when he was alive, took a loan from Sreshti. He lied that he had repaid that loan. He said that lie by swearing upon Goddess Gayatri. As a result, your father was born as a buffalo in the house of Sreshti. As Sreshti is a generous one, he was giving plenty of fodder to that buffalo. I granted a noble birth to your father, who had an inferior birth. I transferred to the buffalo the fruits of past actions of Sreshti who was to meet untimely death. You conduct funeral rites to the buffalo and also arrange a free feast of food. As a result, the karma of your father will get destroyed and he will attain a noble status.' That astrologer followed the instructions of Srīpāda very faithfully.

"My boy Shankar Bhatt, *Srīpāda rescues life in a variety of ways. Sometimes He reduces some life span of the ensuing birth and enhances a life span in the present birth.* Just as was done in the case of Sreshti, He can transfer the fruits of actions from one being to another. *The life span of the person can also be increased by transferring some life span from a well-wisher. In an extraordinary way, He can command death and grant*

1 One of the sixteen avatars of Lord Dattatreya, as the fire of time
2 Food given as an offering

life to the individual. Srīpāda is a complete incarnation of yoga. A yogi keeps the life force in his control by stopping the growth and degeneration of the body. Srīpāda is an absolute living form of a yogi. Nothing is impossible for Him. By breaking the course of inhalation and exhalation, one can achieve liberation easily. A kriya yogi sends his life force through the ājna, vishuddhi, anahata, manipura, swādhisthāna, mūlādhāra regions of the body and also rotates it from an upward to a downward direction and vice versa. The time required for one kriya[1] equals the natural spiritual development in one year. My dear, if one thousand kriyas are performed in one third of the total day for three years, a spiritual development equal to the natural process obtained in a million years will be achieved. When it is mentioned in the Purānas about yogis who undertook penance for many thousands of years, it must be understood that it refers to the time required naturally for that process of evolution. Then it must be understood that the actual time taken by yogis and the time required for evolution to come about naturally are different. Brahma gives longevity to every living being and fixes the number of breaths, but He will not fix it in terms of years. During bad traits like anger and emotion, the breath is heavily expended. Thereby, longevity decreases. A monkey, which has mental instability, takes more number of breaths. A tortoise, which lives for 300 years, takes one eighth of the breaths taken by the monkey in a given amount of time." Ananda Sarma thus concluded.

I became very wise by the good conversation with Ananda Sarma. The next morning, after finishing the morning activities, I took permission of Ananda Sarma and started towards Kuruvapuram for the dārshan of Srīpāda Srīvallabha.

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

1 A yoga technique

Chapter 14

Assurance Given to Datta Das

I reached a village called Muntakallu after travelling for some days. When inquired, some travellers informed me that I could reach Kurungadda after few more days of journey. I was very eager to see Srīpāda. A person was coming towards me with a pot of toddy[1]. Even though I was not a pandit[2], I was a Brahmin observing some religious practices and the stench of the toddy from the person coming in my direction was unbearable and caused intense suffering to me. I was walking quickly uttering the name of Srīpāda, but that person reached me much more quickly. He questioned me, "When I am coming to you is it proper for you to move away from me?"

I asked him, "Who are you? What business have you got with me?" He laughed loudly. The bad odour of toddy was coming out from his mouth. He said, "Before you know who I am, it is better to know who you are. Where are you coming from? What is your destination?" I thought that in this region, even the sellers of toddy seemed to be able to have philosophical conversations. He called loudly all the passers-by and asked them to come near him. A crowd gathered within a short amount of time. He was saying to the crowd, "Sirs, I tap toddy and sell in this area. I live according to dharma. The palm tree is the wish-fulfilling tree for me. This Brahmin waited under the tree till I climbed the tree and brought down the liquor. He told me that he is an addict of toddy in spite of the fact that he is a Brahmin. He also said that he did not have the money to pay for it and requested me to pour some toddy in his throat and earn some good merit. I agreed. When I was about to pour the toddy, he observed that there was a great deal of movement of the people in the vicinity. Therefore, he is refusing the toddy because he fears that his Brahmanism would be tainted if he drinks toddy in the presence of all people. I will be a great sinner if I break my promise. This toddy is equal to the ambrosia to the people of my caste. I hope to de-

1 Palm wine
2 A scholar / teacher, esp. of Sanskrit language

rive lots of good merit by offering the drink to this Brahmin. This Brahmin is dashing all my hopes to the ground. All of you who are pious please teach this Brahmin about dharma and save me from being a sinner."

As all the people who gathered there belonged to the gowda[1] caste who made a living by tapping toddy, they gave much value to the words of their caste man. I was forced to drink the toddy. Then all of them dispersed. That strange person, who made me drink toddy, also went somewhere. I was thinking in my mind, "Taking a noble birth as a Brahmin and travelling to visit the divine incarnate Srīpāda, I drank this tainted drink. My Brahmanism was burnt to ashes. How can I see the countenance of the most sacred Srīpāda now? My fate is like this. Fate is very powerful. When this distorted fate is written on my forehead, how can it happen otherwise?" I was feeling distressed.

My footsteps were faltering. An unbearable smell of toddy was emanating from my mouth. I became somewhat giddy. I was blaming my misfortune and walking while chanting the name of Srīpāda. I saw a hut on the way. It appeared as a place of penance. I thought that some great people were there. I thought that I was unworthy of visiting pious people. I did not like to step into that hermitage. I felt that in a drunken state, it was highly reprehensible to enter into the holy ashram.

When I was going on my way from that hut, a person clapped and loudly called, "Shankar Bhatt, stop. Srī Dattānanda Swamī ordered that you should be brought to the ashram." I was astonished at the divine play and stopped. I was taken before Srī Dattānanda Swamī. With mercy showering from his eyes, Srī Swamī asked me to take a bath immediately. After the bath, I was given sweet fruits. After I ate them, he called me close to him and said, "My dear, Srīpāda Vallabha, the new incarnation of Srī Dattatreya, has immense compassion for you. What a great compassion He has for you! He made you drink the divine nectar with His healing hands. You mistook Him as a gowda tapping toddy. You were deluded into thinking that the divine ambrosia was liquor. What a strange irony!"

I felt as if my head reeled. I thought the whole universe that I was seeing was disappearing gradually before my eyes. Then I experienced as if the waves of the great ocean of boundless cosmic power engulfed me. In

1 Producers of palm wine

that infinite power, my small and despicable egoistic form of jīvātma[1] disappeared. I was immersed in a particular divine bliss in which the entity 'I' was not known or cannot be known. When the limited 'I' was destroyed, this whole Creation looked like a dream. Then Srī Swamī sprinkled mantra-jala[2] on me. He smeared the holy ash on my forehead with his divine hands. Then I became my normal self. I experienced divine bliss for a few moments. When I became conscious of the external surroundings, I realised that I got dragged into the gross plane again.

Srī Swamī said, "You belonged to the gowda caste in one of your births. You were drinking cheap liquor terribly. In the innermost recesses of your personality, the desire to drink toddy still remained. Without the grace of Srīpāda you would have been addicted to a drinking habit and fallen down ethically even though you are now a Brahmin. The glances of Srīpāda are ambrosial. There are many accidents indicated in your horoscope. He was removing them with His ambrosial looks even without your knowledge. Who is capable of describing the greatness of Srī Guru? Even the Vedas kept mum while describing His greatness." I said, "Sir, I want to know the details of Srī Guru's greatness. My enthusiasm to know more and more about Srī Guru is increasing. Srī Guru is repeatedly declaring that He would incarnate as Narasimha Saraswati. I have an ardent desire to know the inner meanings of His sportive plays."

For that, Swamī replied, "My son, the main objective of the spiritual quest of Vedic seers is the spiritual inner truth. The most important among their mystical words is 'Ruthamu', which means truth - that is the truth of the soul and the truth of the material object. When this is commented according to the ritualistic practice, it is called in a variety of names such as truth, sacrifice, water and food. In the same way, the word 'Saraswati' is very significant. The river Saraswati flows underground. It was described as the one that preaches truthful sayings, one that preaches truth, one that preaches consciousness full of ideas or perceptions, one that tells about the great ocean, and the one that illuminates our minds. So Srī Guru is a preaching power, a perennial stream of teaching. His is a voice of truth. He brightens our minds. He installs supreme truth and inner wisdom in us. *Yagna in Vedas is an external sign of the inner nature. Men offer whatever*

1 The individual self or the soul
2 Water charged with mantras

belongs to them to the celestials through sacrificial rites. In turn, the celestials give back cows and horses. Herds of cows mean riches of brilliance. Horses represent the wealth of strength. The celestials also grant us powers of penance. To ensure that the secret meaning of the Vedas are disclosed only to the worthy people, they were preserved with utmost secrecy. Ghī (clarified butter) is the main material used in sacrificial ceremonies. Ghī also has another literal meaning of brilliance. In the Vedas, the letter 'go' has the meaning of light. A horse in the Vedas represents strength, strength of the soul and the power of penance. In their mantras, sages asked for a boon of a horse with the face of a cow. It means that the sages desired spiritual powers that were driven by the illumination. It appears as if the hermits prayed, through many mantras, desiring sons and progeny, but there is a subtle meaning in their prayers. The birth of a son is the sign indicating the generation of inner strength. This was described by them in the following manner: *'The fire is personally being born to us as a son; the fire is a son who is born in yagna. He is a father of all fathers as the universal fire.'* In the same fashion, salila and udaka (water) were used with an inner suggestive meaning. For instance, take the sentence 'Salilam apraketam'. It means that the ocean without consciousness, which is the divine merged in the dark ocean called jadābdi[1], takes the shape of divinity on the basis of its own strength. This was also described as the great ocean. In one of the sūktas[2], sages declared that Saraswati shows the rays of inner wisdom as the waters of the upper strata of salila. There is an inner meaning to the seven streams[3] mentioned in the Vedas. They are the divine attributes of the heaven. Sage Parāsara asserted that the knowledge that resides in the water is life of the universe. One who steals cows is known as Vrutra and Dasyu. Vrutra is a demon who steals brilliance, waters, supreme truth, and higher consciousness and keeps them secretly under his control. The forces which perform such terrible acts are called Vrutras and Dasyas. They are the forces of darkness. They are great enemies of those who seek knowledge of truth." Srī Swamī thus concluded.

1 Inert ocean
2 Hymns praising gods
3 Here: Srotaswins

Boons given to the audumbara tree. The glory of the incarnation of Srī Narasimha Saraswati

Srī Swamī said, "My dear, Srī Maha Vishnu appeared as Narasimha Swamī and came out of a wooden pillar made out of the audumbara tree[1] and saved Prahlada. Prahlada became the king.[2] That wooden pillar, which broke into two pieces, began to sprout after some time. There, an audumbara tree took shape. Prahlada, who was astonished, started worshipping it. One day, Srī Dattatreya appeared in a meditative pose and taught knowledge to Prahlada. Srī Datta, who discerned Prahlada's interest for Dwaita (theory of dualism), blessed that Prahlada would take the form of an ascetic in Kali Yuga and uplift the downtrodden and propagate the ideology of dualism. *The audumbara tree took to a human form and fell on the feet of Srī Datta and sought a boon. Then Srī Datta promised that He would reside at the base of each audumbara tree in a subtle form and since He emerged from it in the shape of Narasimha, He would incarnate again in Kali Yuga under the name of Narasimha Saraswati.* All this was narrated in Pymgya Brāhmana. This Pymgya Brāhmana is now available only near the Shambala village located in the Himalayas — the land of penance of the Seven Seers. The knowledge of Pymgya Brāhmana was lost in other regions. When a question arose whether He was there, Narasimha Swamī sprang from the lifeless pillar in an angry form to demonstrate that He was very much there. *In the same way, in Kali Yuga, when people with impure minds raise perverted arguments as to whether God is there, the Almighty incarnates under the name of Narasimha Saraswati not only to prove His existence but also to protect devotees as was done in the case of Prahlada."*

Then I asked Srī Swamī, "Sir, have you seen Srīpāda in Pīthikapuram? My mind is getting excited to hear His childhood sportive plays."

The great miracle of Srīpāda

Srī Swamī started telling, "I used to stammer since my childhood. People used to ridicule me. In addition, a strange disease attacked me. From my

1 Very sacred Indian fig tree (Ficus racemosa)
2 The story of the Narasimha avatar

fifth year, the disease grew intensely. With the lapse of one year, I used to appear as if ten years of age had lapsed. When I was ten years old, I had the qualities of an old man of fifty years.

"In Srī Pīthikapuram, a ritual was conducted under the supervision of Srī Bāpanārya. Brahmins were given generous gifts. Monetary gifts were given liberally to the scholars. Since he heard the great sportive plays of Srīpāda from many people, my father took me to that ritual. The age of Srīpāda would not exceed six years. Ghī necessary for the ritual was procured. All that ghī was kept in the custody of an old Brahmin. This person was not only a miser but also greedy. He hid one-fourth of the ghī secretly in his house and sent only the remaining three-fourths for the ritual. The ritual started. The priests conducting the ritual thought that the ghī would not be sufficient. It was difficult to procure ghī immediately. Such obstacle caused to the ritual was a matter of concern to all. Srī Bāpanārya looked at Srīpāda with a tranquil face. Then Srīpāda remarked, 'Some thieves are thinking to conquer My kingdom and steal My money. A great darbār is going to be established in Pīthikapuram in My name. I will allow those thieves to come inside. When they come out with the stolen money, I will stand near the door secretly and will hit them with a big stick. With that, some people will die on the spot. Some others will run away leaving the money. I will order Sanīswara[1] to live in the houses of those thieves along with Jyesthadevi[2].' The words of Srīpāda were not understood by anyone. They thought that He was telling about some future happenings.

"In the meanwhile, Srīpāda called the old Brahmin and made him write on a palm leaf in the following manner, 'Mother! Mother Gangā! Give the ghī required for conducting the ritual. Our grandfather Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti will settle the debt. This is the command of Srīpāda Srīvallabha.' This letter was shown to Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti. He agreed. Four people along with the old Brahmin went to Pādagaya tīrtha taking that letter. They submitted the letter into the pond. They collected water from it in the receptacles which they took with them. The water was brought to the place of ritual amidst the chanting of Vedic mantras. The water changed into ghī in the plain sight

1 Saturn
2 Goddess of inauspicious things and misfortune

of all people present there. The ritual concluded successfully. As promised before, Sreshti filled in the same vessels the full measure of ghī as was promised and poured it into the Pādagaya tīrtha. The ghī changed into water while being poured.

"My father submitted my miserable state to Srīpāda. Srīpāda said, 'Wait for some time. I will cure the disease of your boy. I will also remove his stammering. A house has to be burnt. An auspicious time has to be fixed for it.' His ways are unpredictable. In the meanwhile, the old Brahmin came there. He was scared whether any harm would be done to him for stealing the ghī. He was unsure whether it would be better to confess Srīpāda about stealing the ghī. He arrived there with a firm decision that, regardless of what might happen, it would be only good to have the dārshan of Srīpāda. An interesting discussion took place between both of them.

"Srīpāda said, 'Dear old man, you are an expert in identifying the auspicious times. A house has to be burnt down. Identify a correct auspicious time for it.' The old man replied that auspicious times are selected for the construction of houses and for foundation laying ceremonies but not for burning down houses. Srīpāda questioned, 'How can there be no auspicious time for stealing and for arson?' The old Brahmin said, 'I did not hear of such auspicious times. I do not know whether such events take place during inauspicious times and unlucky hours.' Srīpāda said, 'Then, is there any unlucky time currently happening now?' The old Brahmin replied, 'Such an evil time is passing by now.' Srīpāda exclaimed, 'Old man! What good news you have told. A rogue stole ghī procured for the sacred ritual. The hunger of the fire-god is not yet satisfied. He is currently burning the ghī that justly belongs to him and also the house along with it. In this way, he is satiating his hunger. He is dancing with joy now.'

"The face of the old Brahmin turned pale on hearing the words of Srīpāda. His house was reduced to ashes in a short time. Srīpāda ordered the old Brahmin to bring some ash from the burnt house. That old Brahmin realised that *Srīpāda was capable of granting boons with grace and also to cause losses with His wrāth.* So, he obediently brought the ash. Srīpāda mixed the ash in a glass of water and commanded me to drink it. He wanted me to do like that for three days. We were guests in the house of Srī Bāpanārya. The strange disease in my body, along with my stammering, was removed. I became healthy. Srīpāda placed His divine benevolent hand

on my head and transferred power into me and made me gratified. Then Srīpāda said, 'From today, you will become famous with the name of Dattānanda. May you become a householder and be redeemed by preaching righteous conduct to people! In the past lives, you and this old Brahmin were doing business jointly. Enmity developed in business and each of you tried to murder the other. One day you visited the house of the old Brahmin and made him drink pāyasam[1] pretending love. Not knowing that you have mixed poison in the pāyasam, the old Brahmin drank it and died. At the same time, the old Brahmin employed some workmen without your knowledge and set your house on fire. Your house was burnt to ashes. Your wife died in the burning house. On returning to your house, you died of a heart attack after seeing that everything was lost. As you poisoned someone in the past, you are subjected to a strange disease in this birth. As this old Brahmin got your house burnt in the previous birth, his house was burnt down in this birth. I released both of you from your bonds of karma through these playful acts.'

"With the grace of Srīpāda, I returned home. I became erudite in Vedas and sāstras. Srī Narasimha Varma constructed a new house for the old Brahmin. As the bonds of karma of both of us were cut off with the intervention of Srīpāda, it only brought goodness to both of us. His līlas are divine. A new house was acquired by the old Brahmin. My disease vanished; my stammering was also rectified, and I became a scholar. The Daksha Yagna performed in the absence of Shiva turned into a battlefield.[2] It is better to note the subtleties of dharma.

"My dear Shankar Bhatt, all devas are born out of brilliant illumination. Aditi has an infinite form. Devas are her children. They are responsible for the progress and development of mankind. Devas give aura to men. They shower wealth of divine consciousness on the souls of men. They sustain truth. They are the builders of the divine world. They conquer those evil forces which cause obstacles to complete liberation and inexpressible bliss of the mankind. After seeing devas and after observing their various activities, sages described the devas with different names. The words used in the Vedas have a special meaning. In popular usage, 'aswa' means a horse. However, for Vedic sages, 'aswa' is a symbol for life conscious-

1 A sweet preparation
2 Reference to a story in the Puranas

ness, which empowers the mental consciousness and respiratory power. This is a secret of the kriya yoga[1]. Groups of words are also living entities like herbs and cattle; they are not a creation of the intellect of man. They are full of life and originate from the Mother. They originate from the seed sounds. They are highly developed living sounds. They are the numerous progeny of the grammatical roots. Their development is inexhaustible and they divide into different groups and multiply as various classes, races, lineages and families. In the array of words, each one has got a unique structure and arousing history.

Why Brahmins are called Bhūsuras (gods on earth)

"According to the Vedic seers, language was not created by air, fire, or Indra. The mind originated from the tendencies of the life organs. The intellect of the mind was formed on the basis of the cooperation and repulsion of the sensory organs. In this evolutionary method only, the experiment of language and teaching evolved following the living organs and consciousness. My boy, *all devas are the embodiments of mantras. All this world is under the control of the devas. Such devas are under the control of mantras. Those mantras are under the control of pious Brahmins. Therefore, Brahmins are the gods on earth.*

"In the beginning when sounds just originated, they were used by men only to convey very limited and elementary ideas which could be grasped by the five organs, such as light, movement, touch, cold and heat, expanse, use of force, speed, etc. However, as his intellect expanded, the variety and certainty gradually increased in the language. It means that from ambiguity to keen certainty, from material items to mental items, from known items to unknown items, language developed and progressed.

"Reading of sacred books is highly beneficial. You have been selected for writing the sacred biography of Srīpāda. Even though you will write it in Sanskrit, after some time it will be translated into Telugu - the mother tongue of Srīpāda. The result from a devoted reading of the book will be the same regardless of the language it is studied in. Whoever is

1 An ancient yoga technique

reading it at any place, Srīpāda will remain there in a subtle form and will hear it. I will tell a story as an example. Listen to it carefully.

"Srīpāda attained seven years of age. The sacred thread ceremony[1] was performed to Him strictly according to the Vedic ritualistic procedure. In those days when such events took place in the houses of wealthy householders, a lot of excitement and flurry used to be there. There was no limit to the happiness of Srī Bāpanārya on that occasion. However, there was no opportunity to a pariah[2] mendicant called Datta Das to witness that great celebration. Since he was an outcaste, he did not get that chance to witness the celebration. He called all his caste people to his house and said that he would narrate the Datta-charitra[3]. All of them reached his house with great eagerness. *Datta Das began to narrate the Datta-charitra like this, 'That supreme light that was born as the son of Mother Anasuya and Sage Atri in the old ages has incarnated today in this Kali Yuga in our Pīthikapuram as Srīpāda Srīvallabha. The sacred thread ceremony of the great Lord was performed today. After the sacred thread ceremony, our Lord is now radiating with divine brilliant splendour. May good fortune and prosperous auspiciousness be forever to the Lord who is the uplifter of destitute people!' Datta Das did not have any scholarship to tell more than that about Srī Guru. He was repeating the same story again and again. The listeners were also hearing it with rapt attention. This went on for fifty-three times. The ambrosial looks of Srīpāda fell on Datta Das. After the conclusion of the sacred thread ceremony, Srīpāda announced to the Brahmins there that He had to go at once to the house of the pariah mendicant. Srī Bāpanārya asked him the reason. Srīpāda said, 'Datta Das, who has a pure mind, is narrating My history. If what he told each time is regarded as one chapter, it must be concluded that fifty-three chapters are completed. I must immediately give him the result that is to be granted to those who complete fifty-three chapters with devotion and diligence.'*

1 Upanayanam
2 A low caste group; an outcaste
3 Narration of the activity of Lord Dattatreya

There are no distinctions of race and caste to the affection of Srīpāda towards His devotees

"The Brahmins did not grant permission to Srīpāda to visit Datta Das. Then Srīpāda became furious and said with rage, '*Those people who are being cruelly suppressed by you as outcastes and pariahs will have My grace abundantly in the ensuing century. They will occupy exalted positions in the future century. In the coming centuries, a majority of the Brahmins will follow servitude and be degraded and debased from dharma and karma. My words are like edicts on stone. There is no possibility to alter even one letter in them. Nevertheless, if anyone of the Brahmins live virtuously and have devotion of Datta, I will protect them, just as an eyelid protects the eye.*' Srīpāda's parents tried to pacify Srīpāda. After some time, Srīpāda became quiet and kept silent.

"Exactly at the same time, Srīpāda appeared in the house of Datta Das in His divine resplendent form. He accepted the sweet fruits offered by them with love. He drank with immense love the milk given to Him. He distributed the sweet mithai[1] to them with His own divine hands. Srīpāda blessed everyone in the house of Datta Das.

"My boy Shankar Bhatt, have you seen the divine love of Srīpāda? *He is satisfied only with your inner feelings. He is not concerned with your family background, lineage, or other material matters. Even if a low caste person gives Datta-prasāda, it has to be received with devotion. If disrespect is shown, people will be subjected to hardships and losses.*

The twelve statements of assurance declared to devotees by Srīpāda

"Hear carefully the sayings of Srīpāda in the house of Datta Das:

1. 'I will remain in a subtle form in every place where My biography is devotedly read.
2. *Just like an eyelid protects the eye, I will protect the person who is dedicated to Me through mind, word and deed.*

1 Sweets and desserts

3. *Daily in the afternoon, I will seek alms in Srī Pīthikapuram. My arrival is a divine secret.*
4. *I will reduce all the karmas into heaps of ashes of those who constantly meditate upon Me. Even if the karmas are accumulated from many births, I will burn them down.*
5. *If you give food to those who wail 'Oh Ramachandrā! Food!*[1]*' I will be pleased.*
6. *I am Srīpāda Srīvallabha! Srī Mahalakshmi*[2] *will shine with all Her glorious attributes in the houses of My devotees.*
7. If you have a pure heart, My grace will always be on you.
8. I am agreeable even when you adore any form of deity or take the support of any sadguru.
9. All your prayers will reach Me. My grace will be transmitted to you through the form of the deity you worship or through your sadguru.
10. Srīpāda Srīvallabha is not merely confined to this name and form. You can know My cosmic form, which encompasses all forms of deities and all forces as My integral parts, only through strict observance of the spiritual discipline.
11. Mine is a comprehensive yogic incarnation. Great yogis and great siddhas constantly meditate upon Me.
12. If you take Me as the support, I will preach you the path of dharma and also the path of karma. I will always protect you from the downfall'."

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

1 This was a typical request, in Telugu in the olden days, by those seeking food, typically beggars

2 The Goddess of Wealth

Chapter 15

The Account of Bangārappa and Sundara Rama Sarma

I left Srī Dattānanda Swamī and continued my journey. As I felt thirsty, I went to a water well nearby. There was also a bucket to draw water from the well. When I looked down into the well, I could see a strange sight. A person was hanging topsy-turvy supporting himself on the branch of a tree that grew between the circular rings of the clay casing of the well. That stranger called me with love, "Shankar Bhatt!" I asked him with wonder how he came to know my name. For that he replied, "Not only your name, I also knew that you are going to Kurungadda for the dārshan of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. I am only waiting to meet you."

I was thinking as to how to pull him out of the well. The rope tied to the bucket was very weak. That pious person who sensed my thought said, "You are a man who had fallen into the well of worldly existence with mundane bonds. I broke those bonds and remained in the bliss of the soul in this peculiar yogic posture. How can you uplift me? I will get up on my own accord. *If our strength is not sufficient, Srīpāda will kindly grant us the needed strength.*" So saying, he stood by my side within the time taken for the flick of an eyelid. I was astonished. He began to tell, "My name is Bangārappa. You are thirsty. I will quench your thirst first." He drew water from the well with the bucket and drank it himself speedily. Strangely, my thirst was quenched. I was surprised.

Then we began travelling together. He said, "I belong to a family of goldsmiths. I mastered mantras and tantras. I achieved the capacity to kill those whom I disliked with mantra and tantra applications. I had a close association with ghosts, ogres and devils. I used to conduct various activities in the burial ground. People used to shudder on hearing my name. Whenever I was going to any village, the people there used to give me lots of money with the fear that I may cause them troubles and losses by employing ghosts and devils. The major portion of that money was utilised for offering sacrifices to the ghosts and devils who were depending on me. If sacrifices were not

offered in time, those evil spirits used to severely harm me. My face used to reflect evil and malicious features of the ghosts and devils, instead of the tranquility observed in the face of common people. In my wanderings, I once came to Pīthikapuram on account of my past good merit.

"In that town, which is rendered sacred by the incarnation of Lord Datta, there was no dearth of mean conspiracies and mutual wrangles. I heard strange and wonderful things about Srī Bāpanārya and Srīpāda. At first, I wanted to kill Bāpanārya. I went to a pond and began drinking handfuls of water without a break. I had many varieties of methods to kill a person. One of them was to drink water thinking deeply about the person to be killed. By this, all the water I drank used to enter into the stomach of that person. Filled with water, the stomach of that person used to get bloated and used to burst. Then the person used to die. The līlas of Srīpāda are unimaginable. At the time I was drinking water, Srīpāda was with Bāpanārya. Srīpāda lovingly stroked the stomach of Bāpanārya. Even though I was drinking much water, it was getting evaporated on account of the power of Srīpāda. I was exhausted after drinking water repeatedly, but Srī Bāpanārya remained safe and sound. I was worried as to why my black magic failed that day. The reason was not known to me.

Removing the menace of the evil forces for the worshippers of Srīpāda

"I had a controlling charm over snakes. If I recited it, snakes from all corners used to gather at the house of the individual whom I meditated upon. The snakes used to bite the person. I meditated on Bāpanārya and chanted that mantra. Then, many serpents reached the house of Srī Bāpanārya. They climbed upon a wooden trellis in the house and dangled like snake gourd vegetables. After a short time, the snakes returned to the places from where they came. In this way, my second attempt also failed. The devils and ghosts who were with me told me bluntly that they cannot go near the house of Srī Bāpanārya. I understood somewhat vaguely that all this was the sportive play of Srīpāda. As my demoniac nature did not end, I went to the burial ground. There, I made an image of Srīpāda with flour and pierced thirty-two needles at thirty-two points of the flour image. By

this process, diseases should have overtaken in the body of Srīpāda in those points. Not only that, the needles should have changed into a liquid form and should have sunk into the body of Srīpāda. His whole body should have gotten infested with poison and He should have died. This attempt of mine had also failed. Curiously, during one midnight time, I experienced that excessive water was entering my stomach. It was death agony for me. All the snakes that reached the house of Srī Bāpanārya due to my snake charm entered my temporary residence in Pīthikapuram and bit me. I was having pain in those places in my body exactly where I pierced needles into the flour image of Srīpāda. In this manner, I suffered from the reactions to my evil actions in my own body. I suffered like hell. I thought it was better to die, but I did not get death. The torments of hell will be known only after death, but I experienced those torments during the night even when I was alive. When confronted with unbearable troubles, any person would turn towards God. I sought in my mind the refuge of Srīpāda. The form of Srīpāda appeared before my mental eye and He said, 'Bangarappā! You are supposed to suffer troubles in this world for many years for your heinous sins and you are also supposed to undergo many punishments in hell afterwards. However, taking mercy on you, I destroyed your sins in this one night. All your evil practices are destroyed. If anyone who is thirsty is visible to you in your mind, when you drink water and quench your thirst, the thirst of that person will assuage even though he is at a great distance. There is a yogic practice in which one has to hang upside down. You will derive bliss if you practise it. To step into the house of My parents or into the house of Srī Bāpanārya, merit of many births is required. You do not have that fortune in this life. *Fortune is not something which comes suddenly. Misfortune is not something which is given indiscriminately. When the good deeds of past lives fructify at once, it is called good fortune. When bad deeds yield results at once, it is called bad fortune. As Parameswara*[1] *grants us life, only He has the authority to take our life. Since parents grant us birth, they deserve utmost adoration. I will not show My grace on those who neglect their parents in their old age.* You subjected many innocent people to untimely death with your diabolical practices. The result of this sin will haunt you till you see a Kannada

1 The highest God

Brahmin known as Shankar Bhatt. When he is thirsty, you quench his thirst by using your skill. Then your sin becomes completely erased. That Shankar Bhatt will write My history.' At the time of this incident, the age of Srīpāda was about seven to eight years.

"Dear Shankar Bhatt, I have been waiting for you from that day. Today is an extremely good day for me!" Bangarappa concluded his speech. For me all this story was very confusing. I said, "Sir, how can the thirst of another be quenched when you drink water? Please explain the secret of this."

Then Bangarappa said, "My boy, living creatures who dwell in the annamaya kosha[1] have material influences and have experiences in the material world. Living creatures in prānamaya kosha[2] have subtle body consciousness. Living creatures in the manomaya kosha[3] have connections with the mental world. Living beings in the vignānamaya kosha[4] have connection with the related world. The living beings in the ānandamaya kosha[5] experience bliss. By means of a yogic practice, I can coordinate my prānamaya shakti[6] with the prānamaya shakti of other living beings. By this and by the feeling of identity, this becomes possible. Through a certain yogic practice in ancient times, Vali was able to get double the strength of the person who faced him. Therefore, Rama killed Vali from behind a tree. Sage Viswamitra initiated Rama and Lakshmana into two sacred mantras called bala and atibala. If the life force is kept ready according to the vibrations of these mantras, one can attract the universal force in the innermost area of the universe into his own system. If the body is not pure extreme pain will be felt at the time of entry of that force into his system. Not only that. Unable to retain that force, one may even die. In the order of purity there are twelve stages in the human body. The body of Srī Rama belongs to the twelfth stage. The body of Srī Datta is beyond the stage twelve. Therefore, Srīpāda, who is an incarnation of Datta, naturally has infinite strength, infinite knowledge and infinite presence."

I questioned, "Sir, it is said that Ahalya became a stone from the curse of Sage Gautama and that she was redeemed from the curse as soon as

1 The material sheath; the physical and etheric body
2 Sheath of life force; vital body including the astral, desire and lower mental
3 Higher mental body
4 Higher mental and lower buddhi
5 The soul and the principles above the soul
6 Power of life force

the dust from the feet of Srī Rama touched the stone. Had she really become a stone? Or is there any secret meaning in this?"

Bangarappa explained, "You asked a good question. Indra was having connection only with the shadow form of Ahalya. Not knowing it, in great anger, Sage Gautama cursed Ahalya to become a rock. Then Ahalya said to Sage Gautama, 'You foolish rishī, what have you done?' Gautama lost his intelligence and became a lunatic. He visited many holy places and regained health by the grace of Lord Shiva. In the evolution of consciousness, the stone is at the lowest stage. Its soul is in a lifeless state. There are many kinds of rocks. The soul in a certain rock gains the experience of that rock. After those experiences, that soul enters into another class of stone. Another soul enters into the first rock. Only people with yogic vision can know how long a certain soul resided in a particular rock. Assume that when a soul was in a particular rock, the rock was broken into two. Then, one soul will be in one piece of the rock, another soul will be in the other broken piece. Both the souls undergo some experiences. They do not know what sort of experiences they are undergoing, but when they are in the rock stage they would experience the unlimited pain of that soul. They do not have life, but the experience of pain would still be there."

Description of agonies experienced in different births by living beings

I questioned, "Sir, it is said that pain or pleasure can only be experienced when life is present. In such a case, how is it possible that a lifeless material undergoes unlimited pain?"

Then Bangarappa replied, "When the individual soul merges with the supreme soul, it experiences divine bliss. It cannot be described through speech and it cannot be comprehended by the mind. Similarly, when the individual soul is in the rock, great sorrow, as opposed to divine bliss, is experienced. It also cannot be described by speech and cannot be understood by the mind. It is a great sorrow experienced when life is extinct. The soul wanders in many rocks and goes on experiencing inexplicable, unimaginable, lifeless great miseries. In that manner, it eventually enters metals. It moves through different kinds of metals and experiences life in

a dormant state. Suppose you pour upon a metal some poisonous substance inimical to it, then life in that metal suffers in the dormant state and leaves that metal migrating to some other metal. The soul, which identified itself with the metals, eventually enters into the trees through the process of evolution. The life force that was dormant when it was a lifeless material now becomes active and will have an urge to stand erect or to take an inclining position. Its roots, which are meant to give it the strength, will pierce through the Earth and will facilitate its evolution. Thus, the soul enters many kinds of trees and undergoes many experiences. In this way, it would come out of the stage of 50% life and 50% lifelessness and would further evolve as worms and insects. In this stage, its urge for movement is fulfilled. In this manner, it undergoes many further refinements as various worms and insects and eventually takes the shape of a fish. Then, it takes the shape of a bird. After getting experience in the form of a variety of birds, it then takes birth as a quadruped. Eventually, it takes birth as a very sacred cow. As she gives milk to people like a mother, she earns merit even without knowing about it. As a bull, it also cooperates with the production of food cereals. In the next birth, it will take to a human body. Under the influence of mental attitudes, thoughts will get generated. Then they will change into actions. In this fashion, virtuous deeds and sinful deeds are done.

The seven stages in the path of spiritual pursuit

"A man enters into seven stages during the process of his evolution. In the first stage, the organs of the gross body and the organs of the subtle body are used at the same time. In the second stage, he experiences the subtle world with the help of the subtle body organs and gains the capacity to perform petty miracles. In the third stage, he acquires the capacity to travel long distances with the subtle body. Between the third and fourth stages, there exists an overpowering centre. When influenced by this, one will continue to remain in the same state of subjugation. When Gautama cursed Ahalya, she was subjected to a severe shock. Then she felt that she was in the state of a stone in terms of consciousness. She remained in that state of consciousness till she saw Srī Rama. The body of Ahalya did not

become a stone. Her mind only reached that stage. It means that she remained in the overpowering centre between the third and fourth centres. When the dust from the lotus feet of Srī Rama touched, her mental blossom began to bloom, and she regained her natural state.

"For the soul which reached the fourth state, extensive yogic powers are endowed to it. If those yogic powers are used for the welfare of the world in accordance with the directions of the inner self, it will become possible to ascend to elevated states. On the other hand, if these powers are used for sinful activities and mean selfish ends, a downfall is certain. The soul will fall back into the rock consciousness. Afterwards, there will be no opportunity to step into human birth unless it passes through thousands of births. Those who are in the fifth stage are the samkalpa jnānis[1]. The samkalpa jnānis continue mundane activities while striving for the realisation of God. Those in the sixth stage are bhāva jnānis[2] and they have very little concern for worldly activities. Those who are in the seventh stage attain the wisdom of the infinite supreme self." Bangarappa thus concluded.

Difference between divine incarnations and Sādhakas[3]

After hearing the words of Bangarappa, some doubts crept in my mind. To clear them I questioned, "Sir, is the evolutionary process limited only to ordinary mortals or will it apply to divine incarnations as well?"

Then Bangarappa said, *"Incarnations come according to the need of the time. If a man becomes God, He is called Samartha Sadguru. If God comes as man, He is called an incarnation.* A fish can swim and move quickly in water[4]. A tortoise can move speedily both on earth and in water. A boar, which means rhinoceros, can run quickly on the ground. The Narasimha incarnation is with the countenance of a lion — the supreme one among animals — and the rest of the body in the form of a man. *The Vāmana incarnation with the nature of begging came essentially with the*

1 Wise men with a mental decision
2 Wise men having devotional ideas
3 Spiritual seekers
4 This and the following beings relate to the avatars of Lord Vishnu

attribute of tamas[1]*. The incarnation of Parashurama came with the main attribute of rajas*[2]*. The incarnation of Srī Rama took place chiefly with the attribute of sattwa*[3]*. The incarnation of Srī Krishna came principally as an attributeless one transcending all the three qualities. The incarnation of Buddha is chiefly one of karma. The incarnation of Srīpāda Srīvallabha is a very distinct incarnation of the aeon*[4]*. It is an excellent and an extraordinarily unique incarnation containing in itself the unity in diversity and diversity in unity of the entire Creation. There are no yogic traditions, religious or ethical regulations in the entire Creation which do not owe their origin to Srīpāda. The stature of Srīpāda cannot be perceived by intellectuals, however great they might be. He is His own equal only. All theories and traditions find synthesis in Him. He is the first point and the last point for the entire Creation. He is the one who supervises, who proposes and who sets in motion all the affairs of the world, which are pulsating in nature*. This is a deep divine secret. In what way can I describe His position, which is not comprehended even by the Seven Seers? My dear Shankar Bhatt, you are fortunate! Those who got His precious grace are blessed. Others are a waste." Thus concluded Bangarappa.

Explanation of the results of good deeds and bad deeds

I questioned, "Sir, I have a doubt. If He is the inspirer for all actions, why some are born as good people and why some others are born as bad people?"

For that, Bangarappa laughed loudly, "My boy, you asked a good question. Creation is made with the help of the pairs of opposites. If there is no fear of death, even the mother would not love her child. In the Vedas, the word purusha was used to mean ātma[5], but not to suggest the superiority of males. There is as much difference between human dharmas and divine dharmas as there is a difference between human dharmas and animal dharmas. If there are no pairs of opposites, then there is no possibility for de-

1 The quality of inertia
2 Rajo guna, the quality of dynamism
3 Tamo guna, the quality of poise, of sobriety
4 Yuga
5 The self, the soul

velopment or evolution. If it is said that God is omnipotent, it does not mean that only good powers are in Him. Fraud, deceit and violence, which you witness in this world, are a part of that omnipotence. *Because of sorrow, we yearn for happiness. Without the knowledge of misery, the experience of comfort is not known.* These millions and millions of stars seen by us are formed at first in an unorganized manner. When they collided with each other, some more stars formed. When this happened many a time, they formed into the well-organised groups of stars that we see now. The planets in our solar system rotate around the Sun in a well-established orbit. Dhruva[1] is the pivot for the Sun. *In this way, the Creation runs with mutual attraction and repulsion. The person who is attracted towards God becomes a theist and performs good deeds. The person who has a repulsion from God becomes an atheist and does bad deeds. He is the support for both theists and atheists. He is the prop for those who perform good deeds and bad deeds. Nothing is steady in this play of Creation. Those whom you regard as good people today did bad acts in some births. That is why they cannot avoid sorrow even though they are virtuous people in this life. It is nothing but the result of merits from the good deeds done in previous lives that enable bad people to enjoy comforts in this life. Either sin or merit does not yield results immediately, but a severe sin or a great merit will give results quickly. Good books relate the way in which a man should conduct himself to live happily.* He is given a limited liberty to do a good thing or a bad thing. *When unrighteousness overwhelms and the righteous people are in a state of helplessness, God incarnates with His Māya.* It is a wonderful thing that God, who has no birth or death, takes to the incarnation as a human being and lives amidst us.

Breaking the bubble of pride of king

"The rulers of Pīthikapuram used to move incognito at times and elicit the living conditions of the people. The king had a desire to see Srīpāda Srīvallabha. He immediately sent his soldiers to the house of Appalaraja Sarma with an order. The gist of the order was that Appalaraja Sarma and

1 The Pole Star

Bāpanārya should bring Srīpāda to the presence of the king in his court. Srīpāda rejected this insulting invitation. Appalaraja Sarma was also averse to step into the court of the king. A great personage like Srī Bāpanārya would not go anywhere unless dictated by conscience. Srī Bāpanārya asked Srīpāda, 'My dear, my precious gold! Do you have any objection to go to the court of the king?' Srīpāda replied, 'Granddad, the king has no devotion. Seeing Me is not so easy.' Srīpāda told the soldiers curtly, 'If your king wants to see Me, he can personally come here. He is a ruler merely for this estate. I am the king of all kings and an emperor for the entire Creation. I am the Lord of all the worlds. I should not be approached with empty hands. A tribute must also be brought. If the king regards Me as his guru, he should also bring gurudakshina[1].'

"Srīpāda is skilful in creating problems. In the same way, He is also dexterous in solving problems. Srī Bāpanārya, Appalaraja Sarma and Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti were thinking about the consequences if the king were to become angry. On hearing the news from the soldiers, the king violently shook with rage. The king shouted, 'I will make those weak Brahmins realize what will happen to their lives if I think about it. They do not know how powerful I am.' The moment he shouted like this, all his strength departed from his body and he became a weakling. He fainted with weakness. The servants attended to him, but he remained weak.

"In the meanwhile, an ugly, deformed female appeared in his mental vision. She roared, 'I am Shakti. I am jumping into you' and entered forcibly into him. He could not withstand the onslaught of that Shakti. He felt as if his bones were getting powdered. He cried in a low voice, 'Go away at once from me!' The king underwent a hellish agony when Shakti was going out. In this way, Shakti was entering and exiting from the body of the king. He was undergoing a hellish agony through these two operations. Information was sent through the soldiers to the royal priest Kota Sundara Rama Sarma. He performed worship to the self-manifested Datta and gave holy water[2]. After the king applied Datta vibhuti[3] to his forehead, the movements of Shakti stopped. Then Sarma said, "King, have you seen! Our worship gives quick results. You wished for the dārshan of Srīpāda. That is useless for you. There

1 Offering to the guru
2 Tīrtha, water chanted with mantras
3 Holy ash

is Kālāgni Shamana Datta[1] idol in their house. On account of worshipping that idol, sundry small powers were earned by Appalaraja Sarma. Bāpanārya earned some powers from the practice of mantras. Then Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti is a Vaishya. He can purchase a good article cheaply by arguing it as a counterfeit one. He can also sell a counterfeit article by making us believe it as a genuine one. With fictitious fabrications, they are investing incredible powers to Srīpāda and doing His bhajan[2]. Even though Narasimha Varma is a noble Kshatriya he became a fool and is praising Srīpāda as an incarnation of Datta. You need not worry. Our practice of worship is very great. How dare they refuse your orders? The king can bring Srīpāda here even forcibly through coercion!' The king who heard these words and flattery said feebly, 'What shall I gain if I bring Him here forcibly? Moreover, I would only get a bad name. I have a doubt that Srīpāda knows black magic. Srīpāda attacked me with a shakti. Or else why would the shakti move in and out of my body? You have to identify a solution to overcome this. You are our family priest and you always cherish our welfare.'

"Then Sarma said, 'King, the Datta Purāna has to be read devotedly by Brahmins. Worship has to be arranged to the self-existent Datta. Feasts are to be arranged to Brahmins and they should be given generous monetary gifts. Food should be donated to all castes. If it is done like this, Datta will be pleased. Srīpāda would be checkmated. The trouble from evil spirits would be removed.'

"The king made all necessary arrangements as per the request of the royal priest. There were many forests in the Pīthikapuram region. Menace of thieves was also great in Pīthikapura. Thefts became rampant from the day of commencement of the pārāyana[3] of Datta Purāna. The king failed to stop them. There was an increase in the alarming dreams that the king was getting. As if the remedy was worse than the disease, troubles increased. The king was seeing his ancestors in dreams. They appeared with weak and lean bodies and were like hungry beggars craving for food pitiably. They questioned, 'Why are you not offering food during the annual ceremony for us? Are we to remain in the bodies of spirits? Can't we have a righteous position?' The king said that he was performing obsequies ceremonies to

1 One of the sixteen avatars of Lord Dattatreya, as the fire of time
2 Songs in praise of God
3 Devoted reading of a book

them as specified in the scriptures. The ancestors said to the king, 'You are doing all those ceremonies. However, they are not reaching us. Brahmins grew strong and satisfied in the name of obsequious ceremonies. When a Brahmin who practises rituals strictly and conducts the ceremonial rites with mantras and when the person who performs the ceremony does it with care and diligence, then only it gives noble position to the manes.' The king was not having any sleep during night with the cries and lamentations of his ancestors. This condition continued even when he closed his eyes or opened them. To compound his troubles, the marriageable daughter of the king was seized by ghosts. With dishevelled hair she was laughing frightfully and throwing away all the articles from the house. When they were sitting for meals, plenty of vermin was found in their food. Clothes were suddenly catching fire. Whenever the king was coming to the place where donation of food was being conducted, he was seeing deceased men and women of his dynasty with thin bodies and ghostly traits. The condition of the king was very pitiable.

The circumstances in the house of Sundara Rama Sarma, the royal priest, were also being worse. His wife, who was calm and docile till then, was suddenly hitting his head with cooking utensils. His son was tying him with a rope to a pillar. His daughter was spitting out on him and giving blows on his face with her shoes. When Sarma requested for food, they were serving him with dried grass. If he was not eating it, they were threatening to burn him with red hot iron rod. The Brahmins employed by Sarma, however, continued the pārāyana of Datta Purāna. After they finished meals on completion of pārāyana for the day, ghosts, spirits and ogres were moving freely in their houses and terrorizing the inmates. Some women were laughing horribly and proclaiming, 'The ancestors of the king, for whom you are a priest, without regarding other women as their mothers, raped many women. We are none other than those women! We are those victims! They committed heinous crimes in not allowing us to live comfortably with our husbands. We want to take revenge on the family of the king. We will not get a noble status when you merely give us obsequious offerings. You received large amounts of money from the king. You possessed that tainted money. Therefore, we want to harass your families.'

"The Brahmins who were conducting pārāyana, Sundara Rama Sarma and the king were all very frightened with these events. All of them were

remarking with anguish and sarcasm, 'We heard that auspicious results are achieved by a devoted reading of Datta Purāna, but what is this abnormality? Our reading of this purana pleased Shankara and is now dancing fiercely along with His hordes of ghosts, spirits and devils. Our reading of this purāna pleased Vishnu; while denying meals to us, He is granting grace to those beggars who sought food. Our reading of this purāna pleased Brahma and He created those who are harassing us with obscene and insulting words. Oh, if by reading of Datta Purāna Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva are so delighted that they are torturing us by words, without allowing us to die with the nature Vishnu, and exhibiting strange dancing to please devils, spirits and ghosts, then such devotion of Lord Datta is not required for us for many births.'

Man is a labourer in this Creation; Srīpāda is the one who gives wages

"Then the Brahmins, Sundara Rama Sarma and the king surrendered to Srīpāda and sought His refuge. *Then Srīpāda averred, 'Every human being in this Creation is only a labourer. I am the owner. If I am pleased I will give more wages than those that are due to you. If I am displeased I will reduce your wage to account for your bad deeds and will give you the balance. I am the self-manifested Datta in the temple! I am the one in the form of Kālāgni Shamana Datta! I came in the form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha out of compassion for living beings.* How can you derive any result if you worship My face with camphor lights but drive nails in My feet? Who do you think My parents are? Vishnu Datta and his wife mentioned in Datta Purāna are born in this Kali Yuga as My parents Appalaraja Sarma and Sumatī Maharani. Srī Bāpanārya was born as Labha, son of Srī Vighneswara[1] in one age, in another age as Lābhāda Maharshi, and later as Bhaskarācharya[2] in Brihat Sila town. His lineage is revered by those born in the Vaishya caste. It is a part of the divine plan that I was born on Ganesh Chaturdhi[3]. The

1 A name for Ganesha
2 The spiritual guru of the Ārya Vaishya community in the Brihat Sila Kingdom
3 A festival in honour of Lord Ganesha, celebrated the 4th ascending moon phase in Virgo

bond of indebtedness with Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti from the time of incarnation as Vasavī Kanyaka Parameswari and the bond of indebtedness with Narasimha Varma in My form of Lord Narasimha in Simhachala kshetra are everlasting. As they are really pious, they have the connection with Me again in this incarnation. Their love and affection will bind Me in every birth. *When I incarnate as Narasimha Saraswati, I will be born with an exact resemblance of my maternal grandfather Srī Bāpanārya.* Just as he redeems ghosts and spirits by sprinkling water from his copper pot, I will drive away ghosts and spirits troubling My devotees who visit My Gandharvanagar[1] during My incarnation as Narasimha Saraswati. I will grant noble positions to those ghosts and spirits. *One should not be arrogant simply because he is wealthy. The wealth with you should be pure. Otherwise, you will have sorrows. If you are proud that you are holy, you are not at all holy. I have all your accounts with Me. I cancelled the results of your sinful deeds out of compassion. If you are discouraged that you are a sinner and if you seek My refuge and call Me with love "Srīpāda Dattā! Srīvallabha Digambarā!," I will in a trice burn all your sins and make you virtuous.* Since you considered truth as untruth and untruth as truth, you met with all the difficulties. You have abused Srīpāda Srīvallabha and because of that you were entangled in strange and peculiar problems. Even though you conducted devoted reading of Datta Purāna, it has not given you any relief because you abused Srīpāda. Datta Himself has come as Srīpāda Srīvallabha. This is true'." Thus concluded Bangarappa.

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

1 Ganagapura; village in the Kalaburagi district of Karnataka

Chapter 16

The Story of Srīmannarayana

Recollecting the divine history of Srīpāda and remembering Srīpāda's name mentally, I continued my journey. My heart felt elated with joy as I was approaching Kurungadda, which was the present place of residence of Srīpāda. I saw a sugarcane field on the way. The farmer of that field was comfortably seated on a cot. He invited me with humility, "Sir, please take rest here for some time. You can drink sugarcane juice and leave. Please come." I drank the sugarcane juice offered by the farmer. It was very sweet. He was very happy to know that I was going for the dārshan of Srīpāda. The farmer began to narrate:

"Sir, my name is Srīmannarayana. My surname is Malladi. Our native place is Malyadripuram[1]. In due course of time, that village's name changed as Malladi. The native place of Srī Bāpanārya is also Malyadripuram and his surname is also Malladi, but he is a Brahmin and I belong to the kamma caste[2]. We had close association with the family of Srī Bāpanārya. When Srīpāda was eight years old, we left Malyadripuram and migrated to Pīthikapuram. The conditions in our native village became adverse. The financial position was very critical. We could not endure the troubles due to our debts. We sold away all fixed and movable properties and reached Pīthikapuram only with the clothing we had on us. Srī Bāpanārya treated us well and gave us food and drink. We wanted to take on the lease of the agricultural land of Srī Bāpanārya and engage in its cultivation. We prayed to Srī Bāpanārya, 'It is not desirable for us to eat like parasites. You gave us food and water and saved our lives. It is painful to sell firewood in the same place where we had earlier sold flowers. That was the reason why we left our village and came to Pīthikapuram. Please have mercy on us and give your land to us for lease, we will be grateful to you, kindly consider.' On that day, Srīpāda was in the

1 Malladi; village in Amaravati Mandal in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh
2 One of the farming castes from the primarily agricultural state of Andhra Pradesh

house of Srī Bāpanārya. Srīpāda remarked that, 'The food available in the house of Srī Bāpanārya is equal to divine prasād[1]. It is not available for those who are bereft of divine grace. It is impossible for the common people to get dārshan of a great tapasvi[2] like Srī Bāpanārya. You got this good fortune because of the good merit you earned previously.' Srī Bāpanārya said, 'We have already given our land to cultivators. They are cultivating the lands. It is contrary to the ethical principles to remove them in the absence of justifiable grounds. Have patience for some more days. Some other way will be found.' Then Srīpāda said, 'Here are a fistful of black grams. Tie them carefully in a cloth and move towards the west. After the fulfilment of your desire, throw away these black grams. Can't the Lord of the universe, who provides food to the frog encased in a rock, arrange food and drink for you?'

"After taking the meals in the house of Srī Bāpanārya, we started our journey westward with the black gram tied to our apron fringes. On account of the mercy of Srīpāda we did not experience any paucity of food and water. Food was available without asking for it. This was a great wonder. We crossed Andhra state and reached Karnataka state. On the way, we saw a cottage. An old couple was there in that cottage. They also belonged to the kamma caste. They had only one son. He died of a snake bite. After some days, their son's wife drowned and died while taking a bath in the Krishna River. Their son did not have any children. There was no one to look after the old couple in their old age. Their relatives wanted to seize their property. They were ingratiating themselves with the old couple with their sweet words. The old pair was in a dilemma as how to partition their properties between those relatives. We received the hospitality of those old people. We were facing some obstacles whenever we wanted to leave the old couple's cottage. At one time, we stubbornly wanted to start on our journey. Suddenly, all the people in the house suffered from vomiting and diarrhea. When we wanted to leave after they recovered, the old couple prevented us. Their affection for us enhanced. It was not liked by their relatives. They were feeling that we were staying in the house to snatch the property. The black gram tied in the cloth began to give unbearable foul smell. We threw away the black gram given by Srīpāda thinking that they were no longer required. We decided to stay there only, come what may.

1 Food given as an offering
2 A person who performs penance, fiery aspiration

"The relatives wanted the properties of the old couple but were not interested in them. As we also belonged to their caste, the old couple was determined to adopt us and hand over the properties to us. Their relatives were observing these matters. It was very painful to them. So, they arrived at some agreement among themselves. They wanted to divide the property equally among themselves and drive us away from the house in someway or the other.

"There was an astrologer who was well known to the relatives. They offered secret inducement to him and brought him to the house of the old couple. The astrologer told, 'Your guests are of utmost misfortune. Wherever they reside, fortune will not like to stay in that house. Not only that. All sorts of poverty will grip them. Send them away from your house as early as possible.' For that, the aged husband and his wife said, 'If they have the misfortune in their horoscope as suggested by you, some measures of relief must surely have been mentioned in the scriptures. We request you to conduct pūja and other rituals to nullify their misfortunes and confer all auspicious fortunes. We are prepared for any amount of expenditure. The entire world moves under the control of the devas. The devas are under the control of mantras. Such mantras are under the control of Brahmins. Therefore, virtuous Brahmins like you are devas on Earth for us. Kindly honour our request.'

"The astrologer had no other option except to make arrangements for the worship. My dear Shankar Bhatt, rain is required for the paddy crop. Sacrifice[1] gives rain. Sacrifice has come from rituals. The Veda is the source for all ritualistic activities. Men should adore the devas by way of sacrifice. The devas should give all prosperity to them. In this way, there is mutual dependence between humans and celestials. Sacrifices are of five kinds, namely, deva yagna[2], manushya yagna[3], bhūta yagna[4], pitru yagna[5] and brahma yagna[6]. The līlas of Srīpāda are very strange. The sacrifice was performed by virtuous Brahmins with the monetary aid of the old couple to achieve auspicious blessings. In fact, there were no afflic-

1 Yagna and yāgas
2 Atonement for sins committed unknowingly by killing little animals
3 Atonement for offences committed against various beings in the course of daily life
4 Atonement for the death of creatures losing their lives when taking a bath, or sweeping the house
5 Propitiating the ancestors
6 Gratitude towards the seers for laying down the laws of righteous life

tions in our horoscope. By the kindness of the old couple, we had the good fortune of witnessing the most sacred sacrifice. Indra and other celestials are indirect gods. The priests who preside over and conduct the yagna are in fact the direct gods. With the power of the mantras, the small offerings made through the fire to Indra and other devas will multiply to satisfy the various gods.

Mother Earth is supported by these seven

"Mother Earth is supported by the cows, Vedas, Brahmins, pious wives[1]*, truthful people*[2]*, people who do not seek profit and the charitable people.* The bull is very necessary for cultivation. Mother cow[3] gives useful materials like ghī, milk, curd and helps humans both in the worldly existence and also in gaining access to the other worlds through sacrifices and rituals. Indra and all the devas accept offerings[4] made during the sacrifice with Vedic mantras. The Vedas are the origin for all dharmas. Therefore, the Earth is also supported by the Vedas. Brahmins make the people perform virtuous acts like sacred sacrifices. So, the Earth is also supported by the Brahmins. Virtuous wives protect the dharma from getting disturbed through the efficacy of their virtuousness. Truthful people protect the Earth by their adherence to the truth with their truthful resolve. People who do not seek profits, i.e., those who forsake greediness, distribute the sweetness in cooperative life to many others. Charitable persons, with their earthly wealth and the wealth of merits of the other worlds, rescue destitutes, downtrodden, and unfortunate people. Owing to our visit to a great virtuous personage like Srī Bāpanārya, Srī Srīpāda who is the embodiment of the sacrifice[5], used us as instruments and He indirectly completed all the processes of the sacrifice and blessed us with good fortune.

1 Here: Patrivrata
2 Here: Satyavantulu
3 Here: Gomāta
4 Here: Havissu
5 Here: Yagna Purusha

The way in which Srīpāda rescued His devotees

"The sacrifice was completed without any obstacles. The old couple decided that we would be their heirs. Their relatives did not like the way things happened. In one of our fields, there was a garden of chillies. There were palm trees on the four borders of that garden. Those palm trees were given to the gowdas[1] for drawing toddy from the trees. The relatives tried to collect the harvest of the chillies in crooked ways and attempted to take them out. Bagsful of ripe chillies were plucked. They kept those bags on bullock carts and were ready to move. I went into the field at that time. I was astonished on seeing the scene. I was alone and they were ten. Surprisingly, I saw a bear drinking toddy from one of the palm trees. The bear jumped down from the tree. All were afraid of the bear. With its sharp claws, it had the ability to tear the muscles of men. Blood could also be poisoned if its claws pierced the body. The bear directly came to the bullock cart. The relatives ran out of terrible fear. I was very afraid and began chanting the name of Srīpāda. That horrible bear turned very docile. It was calm and was clapping its hands whenever I uttered the name of Srīpāda. I reached home in the cart drawn by two bullocks full with bags of ripe chillies. The bear walked in front of the cart.

"This caused great wonder not only to the old couple in our house but also to all the neighbours. We chanted the name of Srīpāda all throughout the night. The bear was also peacefully and rhythmically beating its hands in tune with the music during the chanting of the name of Srīpāda. The bear also received the prasād of Srīpāda very happily.

"From that day onwards, the bear was moving like our family member. It showed great love towards our family members. It also created terror in those who were inimical towards our family. The bear guarded all our fields. We were rid of the fear from thieves. Discussions relating to the sportive plays of Lord Datta and chanting of the name of Srīpāda were going on uninterruptedly in our house daily." Srīmannarayana thus concluded.

When Srīmannarayana was giving these details, the bear entered the sugarcane field. On seeing it, I perspired profusely out of fear, but it exhi-

1 Producers of palm wine

bited utmost friendliness towards me. When I started chanting the name of Srīpāda, it began to dance with joy.

Srīmannarayana resumed by saying, "Once a tāntrik came to our nearby villages. He obtained some powers by means of some evil practices. He collected lots of money from those who came under his influence. The relatives of the old couple took his help. That tāntrik came to our village. He applied his tantra[1] on the bear. The strength of the bear was completely lost. The relatives were overjoyed. The bear slept motionless. By one yogic exercise, the tāntrik identified closely with the consciousness of the bear and by another yogic exercise, he attracted all its powers into him.

Srīpāda saves His devotees from their past karmas

"The playful pastimes of Srīpāda are unimaginable. It is a laborious matter to search connections between causes and effects. Action will never occur without a cause. Indra caused terrific rains according to His dharma. Srī Krishna uplifted the Govardhana hillock[2] in accordance with His dharma and fulfilled His gopala dharma. In the same fashion, Srīpāda also allowed the yogic powers of the tāntrik to work. The bear was subjected to the torture by the yogic powers of the tāntrik. However, some element of merit in the bear turned it into a devotee of Srīpāda. It cried silently. *Srīpāda will surely hear the lamentations of all living beings. While dispensing the results of one's past karma, He will diminish the intensity of the results of sinful actions with His grace.*

"Discourses about Datta-charitra[3] and the devotional singing of the name of Srīpāda Srīvallabha went on regularly in our house. There were many doubts in the minds of the devotees assembled there. Some of them were absent-minded, but some other sincere devotees had unshakable devotion towards Srīpāda.

"A miracle took place while the devotional chanting of Srīpāda's name was going on. The bear, which lied down motionless like a dead one, began to re-

1 Secret magical rites
2 The Bhagavatam tells the story of Krishna saving the people of Brindavan from the wrath of Indra by uplifting the Govardhana hill
3 Narration of the activity of Lord Dattatreya

gain consciousness. It recovered all its previous strengths. It jumped with joy when the devotees sang the name of Srīpāda. The yoga of Srī Dattatreya is far superior to all the yogic practices of the past. The soul consciousness of the bear was transferred from the bear into the tāntrik. The soul consciousness of the tāntrik was transformed from human nature into the nature of a bear. The nature of the bear was extinguished and human nature was taking shape in the bear. Though he was in a human form, since his nature was changed into the nature of a bear, the tāntrik started behaving like a bear. His own followers tied him with ropes and left him in the forest.

The bear started speaking in human language, 'Sirs, I was a money lender in my previous birth. I used to collect exorbitant interests and trouble people very much. As a result, I now am born as a bear. On account of my past meritorious virtue, I received the grace of Srīpāda. Please note that Srīpāda is verily Lord Datta Himself. I am going to get a nobler birth due to His grace. The tāntrik did many sinful acts. In addition, he wanted to harm a devotee of Srīpāda and a dumb creature like me. Srīpāda punished him for that. *Both protection and punishment dwell in Srīpāda. He is always gracious towards those who adore Him with steadfast devotion. He punishes those who abuse devotees and those who create difficulties for theists. After undergoing the punishment, they gradually transform to be devotees.* Keep on chanting the name of Srīpāda; I am going to obtain a nobler status.'

"All were wonderstruck with this and continued to devotedly sing the name of Srīpāda. The bear was silent and remained in a trance. While the chanting of the Srīpāda name was on going, three cobras came from somewhere. They were also in a trance as the chanting of the Srīpāda name continued. The bear gave up its life peacefully. The three cobras circumambulated the bear thrice. No one could understand wherefrom the snakes came and what for they came. We conducted funeral rites to the bear as was done for humans. The cobras stayed in our house for the whole day.

"Srīpāda's name was our sole refuge at all times and in all states. We were remembering that sacred name. The cobras drank the milk offered to Srīpāda. The cobras hissed if women in their menstrual periods or anyone suffering from foul defilement were in the group. Some people were afraid to visit our house because the cobras were in our house. The devotees of Datta used to come freely to our house. Those cobras were absorbed in devotion whenever they heard the name of Datta or Srīpāda. The relatives of the old couple un-

lawfully occupied some space in their house. The village elders designated that space as a disputed one. Permission was also granted to those relatives to grow vegetables in that place till a final decree was delivered. The relatives influenced the village elders with an enticement of money. Because of this, the final judgement was not delivered, and the judgement was being adjourned on flimsy grounds. There was a snake pit in that disputed land. In the past, people used to pour milk into that snake pit during Nāga Chaturdhi[1]. As there were no snakes in that pit, people used to pour milk there without any fear. Those who were offering milk used to pray 'Lord Nāga! Lord Nāga! Grant us the fortune of your appearance! Fulfil our desires.' All those who prayed like this knew fully well that there was not even one cobra there.

"Srīpāda is very skilful. Nāga Chaturdhi day was very near. This time, those who used to pour milk in the snake pit and pray were hesitating to go near the snake pit.

"Eventually, Nāga Chaturdhi day approached. How strange is this world! They pray, 'Lord Nāga! Lord Nāga! Kindly appear.' However, when Lord Nāga appears, they run away with fear! When we, along with the old couple, placed the milk offered to Srīpāda at the snake pit and prayed, three cobras appeared. They drank the milk and went back into the snake pit. Except us, no one came to pour milk into the snake pit that year.

Srīpāda teaches a lesson to people who try to kill serpents protecting His devotees

"A conjurer came to our village on the day of Nāga Chaturdhi. He was welcomed by our relatives and the village headman. He was capable of bringing any poisonous serpent under his control by immobilizing it with the efficacy of his mantras. He was also capable of bringing back to life anyone who was bitten by a snake. He had the line of Garuda[2] in his palm. The Scriptures hold that serpents would come under the control of men who have the line of Garuda in their palm. The headman and the conjurer were contemplating to kill the three cobras in our house.

1 The 4th day after Dīpavali in the month of Karthika, a festival to worship the serpent gods

2 The divine eagle, the carrier of Lord Vishnu

"Fires were arranged all around the vicinity of the snake pit. The conjurer sat on his seat and conducted weird tāntrik rites. He chanted mantras loudly. We were pained because it was sinful to kill noble serpents. However, we were helpless. We prayed that Srīpāda alone had to rescue the innocent serpents of the noble class. The serpents came out of the pit as if they were subjugated. This gave a lot of joy to the magician and his followers. However, that joy was short-lived. The serpents that came out became bigger and bigger every moment. The magician read the mantras loudly. The serpents moved towards the raging fires as if they were subdued by the efficacy of the mantras. What a wonder! The fire in their path got extinguished as though the fire god gave them the passage. Finally, all the fire died down. The serpents freely departed from there. The conjurer and his followers were aghast.

"In the meanwhile, the eldest son of the headman developed symptoms of a person bitten by a snake. It was strange that symptoms of snake bite appeared, and the body became poisonous without the snake bite. The eyesight of the headman's second son grew dim. It was also unusual for him to become blind suddenly. The conjurer chanted many mantras but to no avail. The line of Garuda in his palm changed shape and completely disappeared. A great fear seized the headman of the village. There was no one to save him except the saviour of the helpless, Srīpāda. The strength of the mantras in the conjurer diminished completely. The conjurer died within few minutes. Who knows how the play of Srīpāda would be at a particular time? The village headman came running to us wailing. What could we do? We told him that his two sons would be alive if he remembers Srīpāda with single-minded devotion.

"The corpse of the magician was in the house of the village headman. The two sons of the village headman became victims of the irony of fate. Our kinsmen shuddered with fear. The whole atmosphere was pathetic. The corpse of the magician was taken to the burial ground.

"The funeral pyre was arranged and fire was lit. There was a sudden movement in the burning dead body. The corpse cried to save it from the burning flames. The guards of the burial ground, however, refused to pour water on the burning pyre. They maintained that the magician became a ghost and re-entered the body and that he would indulge in all evil activities of the ghost with the same human body if he were to be saved. They

added that if his corpse was burnt to ashes, it would remain merely as a ghost and trouble only a few who came under its control by entering into their bodies. They thought that a ghost who enters into his own body would have more powers than a ghost without a body. That ghost in its own human body would cause great destruction and misery. *The peculiar method of Srīpāda Srīvallabha is to reveal the real nature of His incarnation by making people experience the fruits of their past actions by generating suitable feelings in their minds in accordance with their past karma.*

"A kind one among the guards of the burial ground who could not bear the suffering of the dead body poured some water. That water did not put out the fire. On the other hand, it made the fire burn more brightly as if ghī was poured into it. Even though the conjurer's body was engulfed in flames, it did not get burnt. His limbs were not disfigured. He was experiencing the suffering that was to be experienced in hell while he was still in his body.

"Shankar Bhatt, creatures suffering many kinds of troubles reside in Raurava[1] and other greater hells for millions of years. While taking a bath, washing shikha[2], wringing the towel, and when taking meals, water is sprinkled while uttering the mantra 'Raurave punya nilaye padmarbhuda nivasinam, ardhinam udakam dattam akshya mapatishtu'. The water sprinkled while uttering this mantra will quench the thirst of those who have been dwelling in Raurava and other hells from countless millions of years. *Srīpāda is an easily accessible golden treasure to the righteous people. He is like Yamadharma Raja*[3] *to those fallen from virtue and those who commit heinous sins.*

"The dead body of the conjurer rose from the funeral pyre. It started jumping and reached the house of the village headman. Without being burnt and at the same time undergoing excruciating agony from the fire and crying aloud, the conjurer reached the house of the village headman. All of us were at the house of the village headman narrating the stories of Lord Datta and singing the divine name of Lord Srīpāda Srīvallabha, who is the divine, glorious and new incarnation of Lord Datta. The song of the sacred name 'Datta

1 The hell for humans who harm other living beings; the beings hurt by such a man take to the form of serpent-like beings and torture this person.

2 A long tuft or lock of hair left on top or on the back of the shaven head of a male orthodox Hindu.

3 The Lord of Death

Digambarā! Datta Digambarā! Srīpāda Vallabha Datta Digambarā!' charged the atmospheric air there with holiness. *The divine rays from the gross form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha purify those who are in close proximity to the gross form. The divine rays emanating from His subtle form purify the entire Earth. The sacred rays emanating from His causal body purify millions and millions of universes. His great causal body will always remain in the wise, good and blissful non-dualistic state. It rests in eternal tranquility. The superb heavenly rays spreading from that form sanctify avadhūtas, quasi-incarnations, great siddhas and great yogis who dwell in states of sālokya, sāmipya and sāyujya*[1]*. When we chant His divine name, He stays there unseen by us. He proves His power and position through His divine miracles.*

"The conjurer derided Srīpāda saying, 'Is Datta a digambara[2]? Is Srīpāda a Datta? Is Srīpāda also a digambara? Is He a naked lunatic?' The conjurer was brought from the burial ground while the flames were tormenting his body. He was brought in a stark-naked state to the place where the name of Srīpāda was being sung and was made to stand before the devotees. Was it a simple thing? Was it possible to ordinary yogis? Have we heard such līlas at any time? Have we seen them? Everything was strange, extremely wonderful, unheard and it defied logic. *Those who bow their head humbly before the auspicious feet of Srīpāda and seek His refuge will be happy. They will be happy like young infants under complete protection and in the lap of their mother. They will derive all auspicious things and comforts.*

"While the singing of the name of Srīpāda was going on, the conjurer was also dancing and was getting relief. If he stopped dancing, pain was increasing. It was quite troublesome for him to dance naked. He realised that it was all his own guilt and that he was experiencing the results of that guilt in this fashion. He recollected that he consigned many snakes to fire with the strength of his mantras. He thought that it was the fruit of his abuse of great people and digambara ascetics during the period of his ignorance. Repentance swelled in him and he surrendered to Srīpāda whole-heartedly. After this development in his mind, the raging fire cooled down. I gave my apparel to him to wear. He later participated with great enthusiasm in the divine singing. The eyesight of the second son of the village headman was completely restored by the time of sunrise. When

1 Living in the same heaven, living in closeness and getting absorbed in God
2 Wearing no clothes

the cow's milk offered to Srīpāda was poured into the mouth of the eldest son of the village headman, his stupor state decreased and he regained consciousness. The conjurer left somewhere declaring that he would lead a virtuous life ever remembering the name of Srīpāda. The village headman issued a decree giving the disputed land to the old couple.

"In the snake pit, inhabited by three king cobras, three audumbara trees[1] came up. After some time, an ascetic named Dattananda Avadhūta came to our house unasked. He sat at the base of the audumbara trees and meditated. On one Saturday, in the evening, he offered halwa prepared by us to Srīpāda. He also gave it to us as prasād and asked us to eat. He averred, *'Srīpāda used to sit near the base of an audumbara tree in His maternal grandfather's house in Pithapuram. With a silver bowl filled with halwa, His mother used to feed it to Srīpāda with great affection. Srīpāda Srīvallabha, Narasimha Saraswati and Swamī Samartha are symbolised by these three audumbara trees. In the future, the seeds of these three audumbara trees will grow to be the audumbara tree in the birthplace of Srīpāda. His divine idol would be installed under that audumbara tree. Those who offer halwa to the Srīpāda idol installed at the base of that audumbara tree during the time of Sani pradosha*[2] *will have the grace of Srīpāda as a golden treasure within easy reach'."* Srīmannarayana thus concluded.

My devotion was strengthened after hearing these wonderful stories. I left for Kurungadda the next day.

***Victory unto** Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!*

1 Very sacred Indian fig tree (Ficus racemosa)

2 Worship of Sani (the embodiment of Saturn) or Lord Shiva on Saturday evening

Chapter 17

The Meeting with Srī Nāmānanda

When I was travelling towards Kurungadda, I noticed on the way a woman with dishevelled hair laughing hoarsely and advancing in my direction. She appeared to be mentally unstable. As she came towards me speedily, my heart began to beat heavily. My hands and legs were trembling. Two men were chasing her with sticks in their hands. She came running and fell on my feet and requested me to save her from those two men. Everything was confusing to me. How can a weak Brahmin who does not have even travelling fare protect that woman from strangers in a strange place? I involuntarily said, "Mother, don't have any fear. Srīpāda will definitely protect you from those hooligans. Get up without any fear."

Those strangers who arrived there looked at me with surprise. They wondered how this person who was no match for them in physical strength not only considered them as hooligans, but also assured her with great confidence that he would protect her. They warned, "You Brahmin weakling, we want to kill this woman of bad character. You cannot protect her. We have to kill you also if you obstruct our attempts. Keep out of our way decently."

I experienced that some hidden force has entered into me. Words were uttered from my mouth without any effort and from no thought in my mind. Those words releasing from my mouth were such to push me into a dangerous predicament. I said, "You were born as Brahmins, but you have unabashedly killed a cow last night. You ate its meat, drank cheap liquor and followed all atrocious activities. It is not difficult for people like you to kill me or this innocent lady. I am ready for anything. I am telling you this out of pity for you. You will get leprosy after killing this lady. Those who suffer from leprosy will have abnormal desires of lust. Snakes will not bite a leper. Leprosy can be cured by the medicine prepared from snakes' venom, but the procedure for the preparation of that medicine is not known to all. If the lusty desire is controlled and the

appropriate medicine is taken, the disease will abate. If you want to suffer from the most despicable disease out of all diseases, you can kill this woman. I am telling you this out of my concern for your well-being."

Those two strangers collapsed on hearing my words. Wonder of wonders! As some of my statements exactly related to their past, they believed that my forecast would also take place accurately. They confessed their mistakes. I appeared to be a great astrologer in their view, in spite of my total ignorance of astrology. We sat under the shade of a nearby tree. I requested them to give a detailed account about them. Then they said, "Sir, you know all the three times, you are omniscient. Nevertheless, since you asked, we will tell you. We are both brothers. Even though we were born in the Brahmin caste, the Brahmin nature completely disappeared in us. We were degraded on all counts. We befriended beef-eaters. We were accustomed to alcoholic drinks. We committed adultery. We became debased all round with all sorts of bad habits. We saw this lady sitting in a lotus posture on a hillock. We revealed our desire to her. She refused. Since she declined to satisfy our lustful desire, we wanted to enjoy her through physical force, but it was strange that she was coming to our grasp and immediately slipping from our hands. We chased her. We could see you only due to our prior merits." Then I stated, *"God gave us discriminatory power to decide what is good and what is bad. We can derive good results if we tread a good path. If we follow a bad path, then we have to invariably experience bad results.* This mother-like woman appears to be a righteous one. You mistook her to be of a bad character. More than that, you approached her with utmost despicable desires. You are now repenting. I do not know whether the Lord would grant you pardon, but I am giving you a piece of good news. *In the present times, Lord Datta, who is adored by all three worlds and who is the embodiment of the Trinity, is moving in the world in human form as Srīpāda Srīvallabha.* There is no other way except His splendid, prosperous lotus feet to uplift horrible sinners. I heard many of His divine plays. I am going to His present residence at Kurungadda. I turned to the woman and said, 'Mother, please tell me about yourself.'"

Then she started her narration, "Sir, you have rescued me from these sinners. You are like my father. I was born in an illustrious Brahmin family. My marriage took place when I was quite young. How can I describe my misfortune? My husband was impotent. He was harassing me all the time.

I sacrificed all the desires of youth and served my husband treating him as God. My husband was a sadist. He used to allege that I had extra-marital relations with other men. If I decorated myself with flowers and garlands, which are signs of a married woman, he used to accuse me of soliciting paramours. If I shed all decoration, he used to ask me why I was looking like a widow. When I fondled other children in the house, he used to remark that I was feeling sad inwardly because I had no children. When I ate moderately, I was accused of eating like a glutton and wasting money; and when I ate less, I was told that I was acting like that to impress upon the neighbours that food was not given to me in my husband's house. If I undertook fasting, my husband used to castigate that I was secretly chanting some mantra to get rid of him and that I was fasting to please the presiding deity of that mantra. My mother-in-law or father-in-law or other elders in the house did not utter a single word against my husband, even though he was extremely tormenting me mentally. I came to know through experience in my in-law's house how hell could be on this Earth. Time was miserable for me in this manner."

She continued, "In the meantime, an expert in mantra-tantra sāstras[1] came to our village. It was propagated that he had great scholarship in astrological science. My father-in-law and mother-in-law invited him to our house. He made some calculations and conducted some strange rituals and declared that I had misfortune and that my horoscope was filled with many inauspicious features and that under the influence of my misfortune, my husband became impotent. He advised that all evil effects to the family would disappear if I was thrown out of the house. He asserted that the mantra-tantras done by him and the rituals will benefit them and that my husband would regain his manliness and that after performing another marriage he will be blessed with children."

The helpless lady continued her narration, "My husband, his parents and all the inmates of the house were merciless and drove me out of the house. Having no other alternative, I started on foot to go at least to my parents' house. On the way, the bogus magician who visited our house accosted me. He wanted to make me a victim to his despicable sexual

1 Practices for experiencing the concrete manifestation of divine energy through rituals

desire. I was furious like Bhadrakāli[1] and lifted a big rock nearby and hurled it at him with all my strength. The rock hit his head strongly and he died then and there. Oh God! Even though I was a woman, I killed a Brahmin under compelling circumstances. I was out of my mind. Even in my parents' house, I now will have to face problems. Even if my parents protect me with utmost affection, there was no guarantee that my brothers and sisters-in-law would treat me with love. Many people saw me killing the pseudo-sorcerer, but they did not know his crookedness. This news spread quickly in all the four directions. Thinking that I should go wherever my destiny leads me, I travelled without any clear direction. Soon I saw a lake. I was very thirsty. I drank water from the lake and quenched my thirst. There was an audumbara tree near the lake. I heard that the audumbara tree was very much liked by Lord Datta. I was overcome with stupor in my body. I gradually fell into deep slumber at the foot of the tree. I got up after some time. I was very hungry.

"When I opened my eyes, I saw two cobras staying like sentinels on either side of me. I saluted the two cobras and they departed somewhere as if they respected my prayer. I sang *'Datta Digambarā! Datta Digambarā! Jaya Guru Dattā! Datta Digambarā.'* I heard from elders that on mere remembrance, Lord Datta will be pleased and will protect the devotees. Fortunately, I was in the shade of an audumbara tree. I got the feeling that I was in the shade of the umbrella of compassion of Lord Srī Datta.

"A traveller who was passing by listened to my singing of the name of Datta with rapt attention. He stood in the shade of the audumbara tree. I was afraid and said, 'Who are you? Get out from here immediately. If you will not leave, I will pick up a big rock from here and will kill you with it. I killed a bogus magician a short while ago.'

"Then that new person folded his hands and said, 'Mother, my name is Ravi Dasu and I was born in a washerman's family. I am a devotee of Datta. I live in Kuruvapuram. *Srī Guru Datta is splendidly shining in the incarnation of Srīpāda Srīvallabha to sanctify the Earth. He is conveying the good news of His descent, through some extraordinary miracles, to His devotees spread out at great distances. This is to be known only through experience!* I am now going back to Kuruvapuram. You can accompany me if

1 One of the fierce forms of the Divine Mother

you so desire. Kuruvapuram is at a short distance from here. I visited some of my relatives' houses here and I am presently returning to Kuruvapuram.'

"Then I retorted, 'I cannot believe your words. It is immaterial who that Srīpāda Srīvallabha is about whom you are referring. If Srīpāda is verily that Datta, He would attract this forlorn lady to His auspicious feet[1] and protect her. The responsibility of proving Himself truly as Datta rests with Srīpāda. I won't chant His name. I will only recite the name of Datta. I will see what will happen afterwards. If you do not leave this place at once, you will meet with danger from me.'

"Without uttering any other word, that person went away singing 'Datta Digambarā! Datta Digambarā! Srīpādavallabha Datta Digambarā!' Afterwards, when I sat cross-legged in the lotus posture on a hillock and meditated, I fell as a prey to these hooligans. You rescued me from them." The woman thus concluded.

I said, "Mother, *you were rescued only because of the grace of Srīpāda. In this Creation, there is no country where He does not reside as an in-dweller, and there is no time where He is not known.* In this Creation, in different countries and at different times, various incidents occur on the basis of the cause and effect connections. He is the grand cause of all causes. In different countries and at different times, various events take place to facilitate the evolution of the living beings through a variety of states of development. No effect can be found in the Creation without a cause. No one knows whether Srīpāda is attributeless or with attributes, or formless or with form, or transcends all these states. He only knows about Himself. *If we chant the name of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, we can definitely obtain His grace. We can get released from all difficulties and losses."*

Thereafter, we travelled towards Kurungadda with those Brahmin brothers and that Brahmin lady named Susīla. All of us continued our journey while chanting the names of Datta and Srīpāda Srīvallabha. We appeared like a bhajan group to the onlookers. In the middle of our journey, we reached the hermitage of a great personage named Nāmānanda.

1 Here: Srī Charana

Srī Datta in the guise of an untouchable blessing Nāmānanda

We understood that Srī Nāmānanda knew all the three times i.e., past, present and future. He cordially invited us. Nāmānanda said like this, "The name of my father is Māyanachāryulu. My name is Sāyanāchāryulu. We belonged to the Bharadwaja lineage. We were Srī Vaishnavas. After entering the ascetic order, I am now called Nāmānanda. Before entering the ascetic order, I visited all the holy places and the siddha kshetras in the north with extreme detachment. In my quest for a sadguru who can uplift me, I came to Pīthikapuram on my way. As we were Srī Vaishnavites, the worship of Shiva was not acceptable to us. We strictly observed purity and religious customs. After visiting Kunti Mādhavā Swamī, I came across a pariah while I was coming out of the temple. The sight of a pariah was unbearable to me. Adding to that, he came close to me and thundered, 'Nāmānanda, give me gurudakshina[1] and then move from here.' I was flabbergasted. All the people at the centre of the town were seeing this strange thing. People thought that it was one of the abnormalities of Kali Yuga[2] that an untouchable was loudly demanding gurudakshina from an orthodox Srī Vaishnava Brahmin. Some others thought that the untouchable, who consumed liquor, was intimidating the noble Vaishnava. I said, 'I do not know you. Even so, I am a Vaishnavite Brahmin and you are a Chandāla[3]. My name is also not Nāmānanda. It is not proper that you should forcibly demand gurudakshina from me.' I could not speak more than that. His eyes were red like burning charcoal. His facial expressions struck terror in everyone there. He did not yield to my pacifying words and asserted sternly, 'You are speaking lies saying that you do not know me. You are roaming like a mad dog, questioning all sorts of sundry people where a sadguru who could uplift you would be available. Being egotistic that you had a Brahmin birth, you fail to see the truth. I am your sadguru. I am conferring the name Nāmānanda to you in the ascetic order. Give all the money with you to me as gurudakshina and prostrate before me in the presence of all the people and accept me as your guru. If you do, it is all right. If not, I will cut your body into pieces with this knife and will keep your flesh in heaps. I will drink your blood and

1 Offering to the guru
2 Dark age
3 A Pariah

I will hit your head repeatedly with a hammer and turn it into a pulp. I will arrest your life from departing your body. I will allow the life consciousness to stay in each severed part of the body so that you will experience excruciating hellish agony. Business with me will be very specific. Say "yes" or "no". Only two words. Even if you pray, not even one among the thirty million deities would dare to save you.' After uttering these strong words, the pariah drew out the sword from the scabbard and was about to kill me.

"Under these unavoidable circumstances, I prostrated to that untouchable. I offered all the money to him as gurudakshina. To me, all descriptions about God appeared as fiction. However, upsetting all my thoughts, a charming, bewitching auspicious figure appeared before me.

"That divine auspicious figure averred, *'I am Srī Datta. Presently I incarnated as Srīpāda Srīvallabha in Pīthikapuram. You are Mine. I am yours. I am your property. You are My property. That which brought us together is Satchitānanda.* You will be called Nāmānanda from today on and will teach dharma and will get eternal peace. You will reach Me after your exit from this world.'

Srīpāda gives food to Nāmānanda with His own hands

"Sir, I became an ascetic named Nāmānanda in this way. I wanted to have the dārshan of Srīpāda in Pīthikapuram. I was very hungry. No one was giving me food in any house. People were making strange remarks that I was mad and that a tipsy drunken untouchable collected gurudakshina from me. They also decided that it was contrary to dharma sāstra[1] to give alms to me as I turned into an untouchable because I accepted a pariah as my preceptor even though I was a Brahmin. The Brahmins of Pīthikapuram, having resolved like that, did not offer bhiksha[2] to me. I moved to the house of Appalaraja Sarma without any intentional effort. I was so weak that I could not open my mouth even to cry 'Bhavathi, Bhiksham Dehi![3]' In

1 Scripture dealing with ethical principles and regulations
2 Donation of food or money
3 The celibate spiritual student is expected to go out of the ashram and beg householder families for alms for himself and his Guru, to inculcate a sense of humility; literally: "Whichever honourable person is present, please give alms."

the meanwhile, Srīpāda opened the door and came out with a plate of food. He made me sit on the verandah of their house and fed me the food with His ambrosial hands. He cleaned my mouth and hands with His own hands. He placed His bountiful hand of infinite strength on my head and assured, 'Everything will be arranged for you. There is no need to worry about anything. *Can't the Lord who provides food to a frog in the rock nourish you? I will be behind you wherever you are. I will move with you, unseen. I will protect you like an eyelid protects the eye.'* He bid me farewell with those reassuring words. From that day, I became an ascetic and wandered freely. His invisible divine hand is protecting me always." Nāmānanda thus concluded.

Four types of jīvanmuktas

I questioned, "Sir, I heard that liberation can be quickly achieved if we worship Srī Datta. Will there be any special procedure of adoration for that? Are we to meditate upon any separate type of mantras? Kindly clear my doubts and help me."

For that, Srī Nāmānanda replied with a placid countenance, "My child, the destruction of illusion[1] is liberation[2]. There is no rule that liberation comes only after death. The body could be experiencing consequences of past actions. Notwithstanding that, the jīvātma[3] could stay in a liberated state. Such people can be called jīvanmuktas[4]. Sālokya mukti[5] is to live in the world of one's favourite deva. Those who earn more merits will have the fortune of living in close proximity to their favourite deva. This is called sāmipya mukti. Those who have much more merits will assume the form of the deva they adore. This is called sārūpya mukti. In a much more significant state, the aspirant merges in the consciousness of his favourite deva. This is called sāyujya. Devotees of Datta who achieved a particular spiritual state can experience sālokya mukti even while living in this world. The body

1 Here: Moha
2 Here: Moksha
3 The individual self or the soul
4 Those who are liberated while alive
5 Liberation

will undergo the results of past karmas. However, their mind will be concentrated on the lotus feet of Srī Datta. They observe with their inner vision the principles of Creation, the niceties of dharma, and the strange and wonderful procedures conducted by Creation and enjoy ineffable bliss.

"All the divine powers of selfless yogīswaras[1] *are utilized for the welfare of the universe without their involvement*. There are some people who attain sāmīpya mukti while living in this mundane world. They will know the divine līlas of Lord Datta through their inner vision more analytically than sālokya mukti devotees. The happiness they derive would be much more. When a living being is encased in a body, he would be in a state of enslavement with many qualities, propensities and desires. As evolution progresses, the living being knows that it becomes lighter. It is an overwhelming bliss when this state of weightlessness is experienced. The divine plays of Srī Datta manifest easily through the devotees who are in a state of sāyujya. They stay aligned with Srī Datta's will. Those great yogis who had sāyujya in Srī Datta will not have any will of their own. People who have the fortune of meeting them, touching them, and speaking to them will receive the protection of Srī Datta through those great yogis. Only Srīpāda can confer abundant wealth related to this mundane world or to the other worlds. Human beings adore different forms of devas. All those devas are divine aspects of Srīpāda. It is Srīpāda only that showers His grace through those devas."

The significance of adoration of Datta

Then I requested him, "Sir, if such is the case, do we have to worship devas in different forms? Or are we to worship Srīpāda only? You are saying that there is no difference between all the devas and Srīpāda. Kindly explain this matter more clearly for my understanding."

For that, Srī Nāmānanda was pleased and said, "Once, a girl was married and she reached her husband's house. Once, her brother went to see her. The mother-in-law of his sister said to him, 'Your sister is doing many thefts in our house. She is stealthily consuming large quantities of milk,

1 Masters of yoga

curd, butter milk, and ghī. If it was one theft, I would have overlooked it. Oh, so many thefts!' The mother-in-law made a wailing complaint. Then the brother called his sister and advised her, 'Stop stealing so many things from today on. All these things that you are taking are available as integral constituents of undiluted milk. Therefore, you take undiluted milk in the required quantity. The strengths of milk, curd, butter milk and ghī are in the undiluted milk. By consuming that single item, you can avoid the censure of your mother-in-law. In the same fashion, if you worship Srī Datta, everything will accrue. As people are of different tastes, they worship various devas. If Shiva is worshipped, Vishnu will not appear. If Vishnu is worshipped, Shiva will not appear. The grace of the two may be identical. The protection for the devotees will also be similar. The results from the activities of devotion associated with attributes and forms must be in consonance with those activities. Is it not? *When the mass of sins committed in many births decrease and when the fruits of merits accumulate remarkably, devotion towards Srī Datta dawns. Therefore, there is nothing impossible to the devotees of Datta. None of the devas have the power to alter the Creator's writing on the forehead*[1]*. However, Srī Datta, responding to the suffering of a devotee, may order the Creator to erase the writing on the forehead of His devotee and inscribe a new writing of destiny.* Vishnu is the cause for the physical, mental and spiritual states of the living beings. He is the stithikarta[2]. If suddenly the strong power of yoga manifests in a jīva who is not ripe enough, his body or mind or intellect cannot withstand that force and will experience a feeling of being burnt alive in raging flames. Therefore, Vishnu helps the jīva to carry on the life's journey in a proper way and keeps him in suitable states according to his karma. There is no difference between Srī Krishna and Lord Datta. Srī Krishna lifted the Govardhana Mountain. This is known to all common people. Nevertheless, in their previous lives, gopas and gopis[3] were great hermits. The mountains are yoga grandhis[4]. When the grandhis explode, a fierce yogic power starts dancing. Then

1 It is said in scriptures that the Creator writes each one's fate on the forehead at the time of his birth and that fate cannot be altered.
2 The preserver and sustainer (Lord Vishnu)
3 Cowherds
4 Nodal points of yoga anatomy located in the chakras which affect the movement of prana and kundalini through the spinal column

jīvatma will experience utmost lightness and ease. From this subtle state, great yogic happiness can be derived. One has to take many births to obtain this subtle state. Srī Krishna carried the burden of His dependants and liberated them to be jīvanmuktas[1] by destroying their grandhis. This is a spiritual secret. Those who look at this with physical vision will only understand that He has lifted Govardhanagiri and saved His people.

"Therefore, if Srī Datta desires to change the different states of His devotees, He may instruct Vishnu to speed up the progress of evolution, which would otherwise move at normal pace. In this process, He will make the devotee to experience all the troubles that are due to be experienced in a state of unawareness. As an alternative, Srī Datta shoulders those burdens and responsibilities Himself. What a great compassionate one! The main aim of the incarnation of Srīpāda Srīvallabha is to prepare over 125,000 yogis who experience a state of sāyujya with Him. If He wants to liquidate the vibrations of all bonds of karma, the aspect of Rudra[2] in Srī Datta would flourish extraordinarily. It destroys all bonds of karma, whether they belong to countless millions of past births or whether they relate to future times, and He will grant redemption to the jīvi[3]. The aspect of Brahma, Vishnu or Rudra would become explicit and protect His devotee appropriately. All this depends on His resolve. We must follow the path of devotion to generate such a will in Him.

"Once in Pīthikapuram, when a devotee of Srīpāda got up on a horse, it threw him down, crushed and injured him. Srīpāda showed His hand of assurance towards him and all those injuries disappeared in a moment. For another who had no faith whatsoever in Srīpāda, a vessel with one hundred varahās[4] was available. Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti asked Srīpāda to explain this inconsistency. Then Srīpāda explained, *'Today is the day of the death of my devotee, but I extended his life span by another twenty-years. I made this decision as a reward for his single-minded devotion. Today is a day for getting plenty of wealth for that person who got one hundred coins, but because he does not have even an iota of devotion and he derides devotees I contracted his great fortune of wealth merely to*

1 Those who are liberated while alive
2 The Lord of Cosmic Will and Vibration
3 The essence of the individual soul
4 Monetary coins that were in use in the olden times in India.

one hundred coins. I am the servant of servants of My devotees. He is the real emperor who can imprison Me in his heart. Even Parameswara[1]*, who is the ruler of the three worlds, will serve such ones as a servant.'* He elucidated these good things and messages."

When Srī Nāmānanda said like this, we all felt elated. The Brahmin brothers requested Nāmānanda to prescribe penitence for their sinful acts. Then Srī Nāmānanda said, "You observe mandala dīksha[2] by taking one meal a day. Earn money by undertaking arduous physical labour. Offer food to virtuous Brahmins by spending that money. Then your sin will abate. You will get the vision of Srīpāda either physically or in a dream as a sign of the abatement of the sin. You must remain righteous even after the mandala dīksha. If you become slaves to your previous habits by accident, you are sure to get enhanced punishment from Srīpāda."

Worship of Anaghā Sahita Dattatreya (Dattatreya with Anaghādevi) is very sacred

The Brahmin lady named Susīlā requested Srī Nāmānanda to tell her about a way to ward off her difficulties. Then Srī Nāmānanda, who was pleased, averred, "The Soul is eternal. The mind dies countless times in a second and takes rebirth. During the sexual intercourse of a couple, if either of them or both of them experience that their mental consciousness was entrapped between life and non-life, the child that is to be born will become a eunuch. A person who destroys happy married lives becomes impotent owing to that great sin. The life as a eunuch will be like a hell. Some of the causes for impotence or for becoming a wife to a eunuch are as follows: separating a loving couple; harassing a daughter-in-law in many ways by exhibiting the insolence of a shrew; murdering mercilessly infants and women; treating helpless destitutes with cruelty. A man has a right to beget ten children from a woman. It is contrary to dharma to beget more than ten children from that woman. After the birth of ten children, the woman has to be treated like a mother. To remove the impotence and to regain the masculinity of your husband and to

1 The highest God

2 A spiritual discipline for forty days to change one's behaviour and habits

enjoy all comforts from a favourable married life, you can perform Anaghā vrata[1] and make Srī Dattatreya with Anaghādevi delighted. Srī Datta will definitely bless you. *For those who adore Srīpāda, happiness of this terrestrial world and the ethereal world would shower abundantly.* Srī Bāpanārya had a vision of his grandson verily as Srī Dattatreya and recited the Siddha Mangala Stotra. The words uttered from an exalted state of experience from the vision of Srī Datta are very powerful. In every word that was expressed, live consciousness will prevail for many, many more aeons. Mistakes of grammar are not to be searched in such expression. There are no restrictions and regulations to read this Siddha Mangala Stotra. I was fortunate enough to hear this sacred stortra from the mouth of Srī Bāpanārya. That stotra is still vibrating in my mind. Listen to it!

Siddha Mangala Stotram

1. *Srimadananta Srī Vibhushita Appala Lakshmi Narasimharājā! Jaya Vijayībhava, Digvijayībhava, Srīmadakhanda Srī Vijayībhava!*
2. *Sri Vidyadhari Radha Surekha Srīrākhidhara Srīpadā! Jaya Vijayībhava, Digvijayībhava, Srīmadakhanda Srī Vijayībhava!*
3. *Mātā Sumatī Vātschalyāmruta pariposhita Jaya Srīpadā! Jaya Vijayībhava, Digvijayībhava, Srīmadakhanda Srī Vijayībhava!*
4. *Satya Rushīswara Duhitānandana Bāpanāryanuta Srī Charanā! Jaya Vijayībhava, Digvijayībhava, Srīmadakhanda Srī Vijayībhava!*
5. *Sāvitra Kāthaka Chayana Punyaphala Bharadwaja Rushigotra Sambhavā! Jaya Vijayībhava, Digvijayībhava, Srīmadakhanda Srī Vijayībhava!*
6. *Do Chowpātī Dev Lakshmi Ghanasamkhyā Bodhita Srī Charanā! Jaya Vijayībhava, Digvijayībhava, Srīmadakhanda Srī Vijayībhava!*
7. *Punyarūpinī Rājamāmbasuta Garbhapunyaphala Samjātā! Jaya Vijayībhava, Digvijayībhava, Srīmadakhanda Srī Vijayībhava!*
8. *Sumatīnandana, Naraharinandana Dattadevaprabhu Srīpadā! Jaya Vijayībhava, Digvijayībhava, Srīmadakhanda Srī Vijayībhava!*
9. *Pīthikāpura Nityavihāra, Madhumati Dattā, Mangalarūpā! Jaya Vijayībhava, Digvijayībhava, Srīmadakhanda Srī Vijayībhava!*

1 A vow to Anaghādevi

Short meaning of the above hymn:

1. Victory, victory, universal victory, supreme abounding victory to eternally auspicious, richly decorated Appala Lakshmi Narasimharaja;
2. Victory, greater victory, universal victory, superb imperishable victory to Srīpāda, wearing the Srī Rakhī[1] from Srī Vidyadhari, Radha and Surekha;
3. Victory, grand victory, total victory in all directions, splendid indivisible victory to Srīpāda, nourished with the nectar of affection by mother Sumatī;
4. Victory, magnificent victory, victory around all directions, uninterrupted victory to Srī Charana, the son of the daughter of the great sage Satya Rushi[2] Bāpanārya, extolled by him;
5. Victory, glorious victory, universal conquest, unfragmented victory to the sacred fruit of Sāvitra Kāthaka sacrifice[3], hailing from the lineage of sage Bharadwaja;
6. Victory, victory, universal victory, supreme abounding victory to Srī Charana, explaining the great number 'Do Chowpatī Dev Lakshmi';
7. Victory, greater victory, universal victory, superb imperishable victory to the one born out of great fruit of punya to the daughter of pious personage Rajamamba;
8. Victory, grand victory, total victory on all directions, splendid indivisible victory to the son of Sumatī and Narahari, Lord Datta Deva Srīpāda;
9. Victory, magnificent victory, all round victory, unbroken victory to the one rambling always in Pīthikapura, Madhumati Datta, Mangala Rūpa. May victory shower on Srīpāda!"

Srī Nāmānanda explained these ambrosial words to the Brahmin lady named Susīla: *"My dear ones, if this very sacred Siddha Mangala Stotra is recited, a consequent result on par with performing Anaghāsthami vrata and offering food afterwards to one thousand pious Brahmins will be derived. A result equivalent to the one derived by observing mandala dīksha, taking food once a day, and arranging a feast with the money earned through hard physical labour to one thousand pious Brahmins will be ob-*

1 Friendship bracelet
2 Rishi of truth, the upholder of truth
3 A ritual to the Sun

tained. This stotra will be read by worthy people. By reading this, siddha purushas will be seen and their touch can also be experienced. All desires of the mind will be fulfilled. Devotees who worship Datta with pure mind, speech and action will be blessed by the grace of Srīpāda as soon as they recite this stotra. Siddhas in the ethereal region would move about incognito wherever this stotra is recited."

Removal of impotence by the grace of Srīpāda

As soon as I heard the nectarous words from the mouth of Srī Nāmānanda, a thought cropped up in me. I said, "Great one, we want to spend this night in these holy premises of the hermitage reciting this divine stotra, and in talks about the stories of divine sports and pastimes of Srīpāda. I submit to your noble kind self to permit us." Susīla and the Brahmin brothers who were with me agreed to my suggestion. The kind-hearted Srī Nāmānanda agreed upon this. All night was spent singing the name of Srīpāda, with discourses about His stories of sportive plays and recitation of Siddha Mangala Stotra. At dawn, the divine Srī glorious Mangala Hārati was offered to Srīpāda.

After the Maha Mangala Hārati, a cart-man came to our hermitage with a double bullock cart loaded with food materials. The cart man told Susīla that her in-laws and her husband would reach the hermitage shortly in another cart. He unloaded the food materials and left. Srī Nāmānanda was in meditation when the cart-man came and left.

Srī Nāmānanda, after returning to normalcy from meditation, questioned agitatedly, "Where is the cart-man?" When he was told that the cart-man already left he remarked, "Oh, what great fortunate people you are! I am the only unfortunate one." All of us were amazed at this lamentation. Srī Nāmānanda said, "Srīpāda is a very compassionate one. He alone came in the guise of a cart-man and gave you dārshan. Mother Susīlā, you are extremely fortunate. The impotence of your husband is removed. Not only that, your husband and in-laws are arriving here very soon in a bullock cart."

It all happened exactly as Srī Nāmānanda, who knows about past, present and future, predicted. Susīla left with her husband, father and

mother-in-law to their house. I sought the permission of Srī Nāmānanda to travel towards Kurungadda with the two Brahmin brothers. With his blessings, we proceeded towards Kurungadda.

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 18

Divine Auspicious Darshan of Srīpāda

The Story of Ravi Das

I reached Kuruvapuram (Kurungadda) along with the Brahmin brothers. *Srīpāda Srīvallabha, supreme leader of the countless millions of universes, the ancient one, the one without beginning or end, the emperor of the fourteen worlds, the one who assumed a sportive incarnation,* finished His bath in the river Krishna and was walking towards the river bank. Words cannot describe His divine auspicious form. Divine rays of lustre beamed from His divine auspicious form. Infinite love and compassion were emanating from His two eyes. He came near me and told me to pay obeisance to His feet. While I was touching His prosperous feet, He sprinkled the holy water from His kamandalu[1] on my head. Even before I spoke anything, the divine Srī Charana said with an exceedingly sweet voice, "My dear Shankar Bhatt! I attracted you here on account of My extreme love for you." Words are not capable of adequately describing the sweetness of those words and His boundless ambrosial compassionate looks. He placed His divine hand on my head, which has the potency to offer assurance of security to all the worlds and to endow unlimited prowess. The kundalini power in me rose rapidly at once and rendered me helpless. I felt as if the entire universe before my eyes disappeared. An electrical fire of infinite strength burned every nerve and infused stupor as if thousands of oceans rose terribly, trying to submerge me in them. My eyes got closed. My heartbeat and pulse halted. My mind was rid of all queerness and it became still and stood in a great void. The consciousness in my heart merged with the infinite universal consciousness. At times, I had the awareness that I was in a state of bliss in an extremely subtle form. At other times, even that notion of 'I am' subsided and I was in an ineffable state of divine bliss. In that state, when I

1 Small pot made of wood, earth, metal or dried pumpkin used by yogis or ascetics

got the knowledge that millions and millions of universes were created, sustained and liquidated from me, it was felt that 'I am' was not separate from this universal consciousness. When this 'I am' was at rest I was in heavenly happiness. All this was very strange to me.

Then Srīpāda, with great love, sprinkled water on me from His kamandalu. I returned to the normal state. Srīpāda Srīvallabha, who is the Ādiguru[1] of this universe, looked at me with a compassionate ambrosial look, which relegated the love of a thousand mothers into oblivion. He smiled at me very charmingly.

Foreigners visiting Srīpāda

The two Brahmins who came with me did not have the courage to speak to Srīpāda or touch His divine auspicious feet. Srīpāda glanced at me and asked me about those two people. I said, "Lord, these two people, who came here to have the dārshan of the divine Srī Charan, are also Brahmins." For that, the tranquil handsome one said, "My dear, they do not look like Brahmins. They appear to be foreigners and those who eat the flesh of cows. The truth can be ascertained by questioning them." Then those two brothers confessed that they were not Brahmins and that they were Mlechhas[2]. They recited Kalmān[3], which is normally read by Muslims. Srīpāda revels in sportive plays every moment. I was astonished. Then the great preceptor said, *"Only on account of the fortune that is accured from the fruits of virtuous deeds performed over many births, it becomes possible to recognize the universal Lord Srī Dattatreya moving in disguise under the name of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. It is a greater fortune to have this feeling in a steadfast fashion and to have the feeling of complete devotion to Him.* All devas give their presence in a cow. A house without such a cow is equal to that of a burial ground. Those who serve the cows with care are much dearer to Me. Cow's milk gives strength and satisfaction. Brahmins who eat the flesh of a cow deserve punishment. There is a tradition to sacrifice goats in yagnas and yāga rituals. With this

1 First and foremost guru
2 Non-Vedic, foreign people
3 Words of Islamic belief recited by Muslims; also called Kalima

sacrifice, not only the sacrificial goat, but many other goats which have blood relation with it, will be released from their low births and will obtain noble births. They will get a Brahmin birth very soon. Those who conduct such yagna sacrifices must have sufficient yogic strength and tapobala[1] to impart noble births in this manner to the sacrificial goat. If a yagna is conducted and a goat is sacrificed without having the related yogic strength and the tapobala, then they would accumulate the sin of killing that goat. Acts of dharma vary according to places and times. If a great ascetic eats the flesh of a cow, even if he happens to be a Mlechha, if it is done with the intent of offering to the Parameswara[2], then it becomes possible for the cow and its blood-related ones to get noble births. Otherwise, a great sin would get accumulated. That is why, as a general regulation, the killing of cows is considered a heinous crime.

"Krishna searched for a dharma-kshetra[3] suitable for the battle between Kauravas and Pāndavas before the commencement of the Kurukshetra battle[4]. Arjuna was with Krishna. At one place, a farmer was letting water into his field. The farmer was searching for a rock to arrest the flow of water. In the meantime, his son brought him food from the house. After finishing his meals, the farmer severed the head of his son with a sword and placed it as a barrier to the water flow. The father who was striking with the sword and also the son who was struck down with the sword did not undergo any emotions and remained unperturbed when the deathblow was dealt. Food is required for the welfare of the society. The only concern of the cultivator is to grow the crop. The cultivator discharged his dharma without any desire for reward. Krishna decided that area as the suitable dharma-kshetra[5] for the ensuing battle.

"You, namesake Brahmins! Eating the flesh of cows is not at all justified for you. However, on account of previous good merit, the strength of

1 Power acquired by religious austerities
2 The highest God
3 A place of dharma
4 The battle in Kurukshetra is described in the Indian epos Mahabharata
5 *Editor's Note:* In ancient civilisations offering one's life or that of a dear one for a cause of general welfare was considered primary and maintaining life was secondary. A soldier makes a great sacrifice by willing to offer his life for the nation. Such sacrifices were regarded as noble deeds of immortal value upholding the Law.

the prayers of your ancestors, and moreover, due to My free compassion, you had the fortune of having My dārshan. Consider this as a great fortune and a precious opportunity. I will not accept your salutations. Do not touch My feet. It is not possible to sprinkle on you the sacred water from My kamandalu[1]. Leave this place immediately and go wherever you want. I will see that there is no dearth of food and clothes for you. Marry Muslim women and follow the Mlechha religion. Let the cows killed by you become your children in this life and in other ensuing lives. Let them harass you in various ways and live happily by freely enjoying your hard-earned money! Let both of you, who had the fortune of seeing Me, become famous with the names of Bade Baba and Abdul Baba and be uplifted by the complete sadguru incarnation. There is a village called Sīladhi in Maharashtra. It will become a siddha kshetra in the course of time. You will receive the blessings of Sai Baba there. My command is inviolable. Like engravings on a rock, it cannot be altered. Get out of this place at once." Srīpāda ordered them like that.

Only Srīpāda and I were there. Then a washerman named Ravi Das arrived. He was repeatedly saluting Srīpāda. Srīpāda did not care about him for some time. Thereafter, Srīpāda turned towards him and smiled. I thought what the reason might be for that. With a charming smile He looked at me with compassion and touched the centre of my eyebrows strongly. Wonder! Wonderful scenes were seen before my mental eye:

The acts of grace of Srīpāda towards devotees

Ravi Das was rowing a boat towards Kurungadda. An erudite Vedic scholar was travelling in that boat. The pandit said that he should be taken alone in the boat because he was a Brahmin and if others get into the boat he would suffer from the sin of contact and touch by the untouchables. Ravi Das demanded a higher fare. The pandit said that he was a great scholar and that he was going to visit Srīpāda. He added that Srīpāda would give him a liberal monetary gift on recognizing his scholarship, provided Srīpāda was a learned one. He promised to pay the boat fare out of that

1 Small pot made of wood, earth, metal or dried pumpkin used by yogis or ascetics

amount. Ravi Das agreed. The boat journey started. The pandit noticed during the course of conversation that Ravi Das did not have any knowledge about the Purānas and other ancient legends. He remarked, "You see, my life is fulfilled. Since you do not have any knowledge of the Purānas and the legends, three-fourth of your life is a waste." Ravi Das kept quiet. The river current was fierce and the water was overflowing. Added to that, a hole appeared in the boat and water was entering into it. Ravi Das asked, "Sir, do you know swimming?" The pandit replied in the negative. Then Ravi Das said, "I know swimming whereas you cannot swim. Therefore, your life is a hundred percent waste." Uttering the name of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, Ravi Das tried to jump into the river. A brilliant divine illumination dazzling the eyes appeared in the middle of the river. Ravi Das thought it was all the magnificence of Srīpāda. Water was entering into the boat; however, some unseen hand was throwing all the water out from the boat. Both of them reached the shore safely and approached Srīpāda for dārshan. Until then, when Ravi Das saluted, Srīpāda rejected it with indifference, but on that day, He received the salutation of Ravi Das with a loving smile shining on a placid countenance. He, however, saw the scholar accompanying Ravi Das with complete indifference. The scholar, who wanted a scholarly debate, stood dumbfounded.

Srīpāda said, "Pandit, you lost discrimination between right and wrong under the influence of pedantic arrogance. You are a great scholar hailing from a noble family, but you amassed sin instead of earning good merit. You subjected your dutiful wife to great anguish. You forcibly separated the wife of a washerman from him when they were leading a happy married life. You took her as your concubine. This wife of the washerman who became your concubine under unavoidable circumstances is cursing you mentally all the time even though she is submitting her body to you. Your wife, who is a good Brahmin lady, is undergoing untold mental agony as her married life is ruined. I am observing all these things and so I attracted you here today. According to your horoscope, death is decided for you today. I am granting you a lifespan of three more years at present. Go to your home and change your prior evil conduct. If not, I will leave you to your fate. You are a scholar, there is no doubt. Do you want Me to reward you with money for your scholarship? Or do you want an extension of life by three more years? Reply immediately."

The pandit who heard the words of the omniscient Srīpāda remained speechless like a mute. He had a desire in his heart for the extension of his lifespan, but words did not come out of his mouth.

Srīpāda Himself declared, "I am extending the duration of your life as per your heart's desire. The washerwoman who is your concubine should have been your wife in the next birth, but you took her as your own in this birth. Dharmas relating to a particular birth are restricted to that birth only. You have transgressed that stipulation. In the ensuing birth, that washermen couple would enjoy regal comforts. You will be born as an impotent one and will work as a servant to that washerwoman and suffer the consequences of your past deeds. If you perform some good acts during the next three years, you will serve the washerwoman in the next birth without any want for food and clothing. If you indulge in evil acts in the next three years, you will serve the washerman and his wife and will undergo all sorts of troubles without being able to get compensation commensurate with your labours. Ravi Das, who brought you to Me, will be credited with all your good merit because he brought you here when you were due to die. As a result of this good merit, he can serve Me — an actual incarnation of Datta. You must get out of this holy land at once." Srīpāda commanded the pandit.

The pandit left. Ravi Das was washing the clothes of Srīpāda, cleaning the ashram premises and rendering other services.

Whenever Srīpāda came to the river for bath, Ravi Das used to prostrate before Him. Srīpāda used to accept his salutations with a gracious countenance. Ravi Das remembered the words of his father. His father said that since Srīpāda was omnipresent, every salutation made to Him would confer the grand fortune of receiving salutations from hundreds of people. His father also said that this great fortune could be obtained only when Srīpāda accepts those salutations. Ravi Das was overjoyed because Srīpāda accepted his salutations.

One day, Ravi Das saw a king playing in the water with a beautiful woman, and thought that it would be good if he also took birth as a king. When Srīpāda came for the river bath, this matter came up for discussion during the conversation with Him. Srīpāda gave a boon to Ravi Das to be born in a Muslim ruler's family in Vaidhuryanagar. He assured that He would give His dārshan again during the incarnation as Narasimha Saraswati. He

looked at Ravi Das with a peculiar smile. Ravi Das died then and there. I underwent amazement and wonder on seeing these wonderful scenes before my mental eyes.

When I regained normalcy, Srīpāda glanced at me and smiled sweetly. How much can we praise Srī Gurudev who plays sportive pastimes every moment?

In the meantime, some ladies came there with their sick husbands. Some parents came there seeking worthy husbands for their daughters. Srī Gurudev was distributing bits of turmeric. All of them left the place with great happiness.

Granting a cup for receiving alms to Vallabhesa by Srīpāda

In the meanwhile, a young Brahmin came there. His body was filled with dust. He belonged to the Kasyapasa lineage and the Āpasthamba sūtra. His name was Vallabheswara Sarma. He came from Pīthikapuram agrahāram. Srīpāda inquired about the welfare of all his kith and kin in Pīthikapuram in a very detailed manner. This was only a pleasing pastime for the omniscient one. Many people brought food preparations for the midday bhiksha[1]. In the meanwhile, He extended His divine hands upwards as if He was receiving something. A large silver vessel filled with a sweet preparation called khīr was received. Srīpāda directed me to distribute it to the disciples who assembled there. The vessel never became empty even though khīr was distributed to many people. He ordered that the food preparations brought by His disciples should be thrown into the river Krishna. That work was entrusted to Ravi Das. The prasād[2] of Swamī was distributed even to the creatures in the waters of the river.

Srīpāda asked Vallabhesa to sit near Him. I sat by the side of Vallabhesa. A Kannada Brahmin by the name of Subbanna Sastry sat beside me. A poor Brahmin came and prayed to Swamī to arrange a good match to his daughter to be married. Then Srīpāda said, "Why fear when I am here? Fear exists where there is sin. This Vallabhesa will be your son-in-law. Subbanna Sastry

1 Donation of food or money
2 Food given as an offering

will officiate the marriage as a purohit[1]. The forefathers of Vallabhesa were very angry. The curse of the ancestors is not good for life. Only the obsequies and offerings of oblations made with devotion will reach the forefathers. They will reach them in no other way. Therefore, incantations from the Garuda Purana should be read prior to reading marriage mantras. Receive a bit of turmeric for an auspicious married life of your daughter. The prasād which you received today is a very rare one. The Malladi family, the Vatsavāyi family and Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti in Pīthikapuram prepared the sweet pudding as an offering to Me. I distributed it to you. Those who are troubled by evil spirits such as ghouls[2] and devils will get an immediate relief from this prasād. Those who grope in the misery of penury will have their wealth enhanced after taking this prasād."

While Srīpāda was making this divine conversation, tears rolled from His cheeks. Srīpāda, with a hoarse voice, said, *"My bond of indebtedness with the Malladi, Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti and Vatsavāyi families transcends time. I melt at their loving devotion. I will freely go into their kitchens in a subtle form seeking something to eat. Not only those people, but I will move as a young boy in the houses of those who adore Me with affectionate devotion. The sound of My footsteps will always echo in their hearts.*

"No one should stay during the nights in Kurungadda without My permission. Ogres and fierce ghosts cry with extreme anguish for liberation. I devour them and grant them new and liberated bodies. Devas, celestials, yakshas[3], hidden forces, and many elevated souls belonging to the maha padārdha[4] come here for the chance of My dārshan. Maha siddhas, maha yogis and maha purushas, engaged in penance from many centuries, come here excited with joy for My dārshan, sparsan[5] and conversation. You cross the river happily. My order is to be compulsorily complied with." That was the command of Srīpāda.

We crossed the river and reached the village on the riverbank. Subbanna Sastry made the bride and bridegroom sit in the house of the bride's father.

1 Priest
2 Corpse swallowing monsters
3 Celestial persons
4 Great matter
5 Touch

He was reading mantras. Sastry only knew marriage mantras, but he had no knowledge about the mantras for the funeral rites and the related procedures. Moreover, he never heard such funeral mantras being read after making the bride and bridegroom seat for the marriage. He never heard or found such mantras. Subbanna Sastry sat in the position of the presiding priest after meditating upon Srīpāda. Incantations were coming out of his mouth effortlessly. This created wonder in Subbanna Sastry. After this activity was completed, their marriage was performed with marriage mantras. A turmeric root was tied to the bride instead of a mangala sutra[1]. The bride's father, as well as the bridegroom, were penniless. The Brahmins who came for the marriage complained and left from the marriage venue since the marriage was not conducted strictly according to the tradition. Vallabhesa had no parents. The parents of the bride, the bridegroom, the priest and myself, totalling five only, were present besides the bride. Then we went for the dārshan of Srīpāda along with the newly married couple.

Srī Swamī blessed us and made us happy. He instructed us to remain in meditation in His presence for some time. I visualized the future of Vallabhesa as soon as I went in meditation. Vallabhesa was trading turmeric. He decided that he would arrange the worship of one thousand Brahmins in Kuruvapuram after gaining profit in his business. He earned plenty of money by the grace of Srīpāda, but he was postponing the fulfilment of the vow. In the meantime, Srīpāda disappeared in Kurungadda and remained incognito. Only the pādukas[2] of Srīpāda were in Kurungadda. When Vallabhesa was carrying money to Kurungadda, four thieves joined him in the guise of travellers and killed him. While he was being beheaded, he remembered Srīpāda. Srīpāda came in the form of an ascetic with a trident in hand and slayed three thieves. The fourth one submitted that he never committed any theft, that the other three thieves met him in the mid-way and that he colluded with them under the influence of their alluring words. He prayed for protection.

The compassionate Srī Gurudev granted him assurance and gave some holy ash, commanding him to sprinkle it on the body of Vallabhesa and to join his head and torso. From the ambrosial glances of Srīpāda, Vallabhesa regained life. Vallabhesa learnt all what happened from the thief. There

1 The cord as token of marriage, fastened on the neck of the bride
2 Sandals worshipped as holy

was no limit for his astonishment and happiness. He was sorry that he could not get the fortune of seeing Srīpāda. The thief was happy that he could have the dārshan of Srīpāda on account of Vallabhesa. Vallabhesa realized his mistake. He had the capacity long back to offer a feast to one thousand Brahmins. At that present time, he could easily offer a grand feast of food for even four thousand people. To make amends for his unnecessary delay, which resulted in many difficulties, Vallabhesa arranged a grand food festival in Kurungadda for four thousand Brahmins.

The cosmic form of Srīpāda

After some time, Srīpāda ordered us to open our eyes. Afterwards, Srīpāda observed, "In My presence, no action takes place without a cause. The way of Creation is indeed very strange. It is strange that, having no form, I have come in front of you within the form of a man. It is a wonder that I, having no qualities, am seen by you as having qualities. It is strange that I, having no limits and boundaries, am seen as having limits and boundaries. All forces are in My hand. I am the one who resides in each and every atom of this vast universe. I am the resolve that binds together one atom with the other. I am the Rudra[1] of the final destruction blasting each and every atom, preparing the ground for the process of a new Creation. I am the ancient phenomenon that teaches you what knowledge is and what ignorance[2] is. I enjoy by throwing all living creatures into a variety of illusions. I am the one who rushes with a thousand hands to the succour of those who call Me in distress. I am the ancient one who protects them. I am the real 'I AM' who is present in all the creatures as 'I am'. You have to be surprised if omnipresence, omnipotence, and omniscience are not within Me. What is there for you to be surprised when those aspects are evident and experienced by you?"

When Srī Gurudev, who was a personification of the Parabrahman, was speaking like that, the sound of a bell was heard from somewhere. To the astonishment of all, the bell descended near the auspicious feet of Srīpāda. After a few moments, it disappeared while all were looking at it.

1 The Lord of Cosmic Will and Vibration
2 Here: Jnāna and ajnāna

Srīpāda's respect for all women as mothers

Srīpāda said, *"This incarnation of Srīpāda Srīvallabha is a great incarnation that grants instantaneous results. No avadhūta*[1] *can obtain complete perfection without remembering My name. He cannot overcome the obstacles to yoga.* Oh Vallabhesā, listen! When your father died in your childhood, I know how your four paternal uncles subjected you to many difficulties and turned you into a beggar by snatching your property. I also understand that their children also harbour enmity towards you. After their death, your paternal uncles will be reborn and will become thieves. They will plan to plunder your money on your way to Kurungadda. If you remember My name, I will immediately appear and kill those three robbers with My trident. I will leave the fourth one because he is not very guilty."

On hearing the words of Srīpāda, the wife of Vallabhesa began to shed tears. Then Srīpāda said, *"Mother! I, Srīpāda Srīvallabha, see in every woman akhanda sowbhāgyavati Sumatī Maharani, who gave Me birth.* I am always an infant child in the lap of that great mother. Don't grieve. Preserve the turmeric root which I give you. That will confer all auspiciousness to you. You will live like a sumangali[2]. My law is unchangeable like a rock edict. It is not possible for any force in this Creation to alter it.

"I want to make the name of My father, who is my first guru and the one who initiated Me into the Gayatri mantra, eternal. Therefore, My next incarnation will take the word Narasimha from the name of My father, with the added appellation Saraswati, and will be known as Narasimha Saraswati. I desire to render the form of My grandfather Bāpanārya long-lasting. For that purpose, the figure of Narasimha Saraswati will exactly resemble My grandfather in all respects. My grandfather is My second guru. I received a Vedic education from him. The bell that you have seen now was once in the house of My grandfather. It will be moving to many countries to bless spiritual aspirants according to My will. It will travel beneath the layers of the Earth as well as on the outer layers of the Earth. Shankar Bhatt, the bell will return to Pīthikapuram when the eighteenth chapter — the number that represents victory — in

1 Persons liberated from karmic bondages, beyond ego-consciousness and duality
2 A pious lady having a husband

the Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam, which is being written by you, reaches Pīthikapuram. This bell will undergo many changes of shape and measurement and will move according to My will. A great Samsthan will be established in the house of My grandfather. I will send to Pīthikapuram the bell, ringing victory as a mark of My love."

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 19

Meeting with Gurucharan

The Vallabheswara Sharma couple, Subbanna Sastry and I were recollecting the sportive pastimes of Srīpāda. In the meanwhile, a distant relative of Sripada named Linganna Sastry came there. He was a great scholar in the Vedas and Vedāngas. Linganna Sastry said, "I came to Pīthikapuram for offering oblations to my forefathers at Pādagaya kshetra[1]. Even though he was a religious and rich Brahmin, my grandfather was a great miser. With his vicious reasoning, he implemented the dharmas, which were inscribed in the shastras to his advantage. He interpreted the principle of yadhāshakti[2] in a perverse way. He used to offer the ten types of traditional gifts that were meant for the satisfaction of the departed ancestors with a very meagre money. He used to inwardly feel uncomfortable that during the annual srāddha ceremonies[3], money was unnecessarily spent and that the guests were eating like gluttons as if it was a good opportunity. He used to be unhappy that his house was becoming a hollow shell robbed of all wealth with these rituals. My grandfather died after some time. My father also followed the footsteps of my grandfather. Time, which devours the world, devoured my father also. However, I used to carry out all the ceremonial rituals for my ancestors strictly according to scriptures to the extent it was appropriate for my capacity.

"In the meanwhile, quarrels were flaring up in our house for no reason and there was no peace of mind. Quarrels were occurring suddenly without any reason. After stepping into our house, even very calm-going relatives were becoming very fierce and were starting to fight. Our house became a centre for quarrels. My wife was angry with me and left for her parents' house. While I was asleep, my son sat on my chest and tried to stifle my neck with his two hands. My daughter-in-law was abusing me by saying,

1 Pithapuram, as the place where the feet of the asura (demon) Gaya fell
2 According to one's own might
3 Ceremony in memory of ancestors

'Many people of your age reached the burial ground. When will your turn come?' My daughter was saying to me harshly that she must have committed lot of sin in some birth to be born as a daughter to a destitute like me in this life. My son-in-law was taunting me with sarcastic remarks like, 'There are no servants in our house. You are robust like a rock. You can come to our house and do work like sweeping the house, tending the cattle in the cow-shed, and when required, you can go to the meals offered to Brahmins during religious rites and accept donation of the gingelly seeds. Even by starving ourselves, we can arrange gluttonous food for you. You can cook the food and you can give us if anything remains after your eating.'

"Life became thorny for me. Every living being develops an interest towards life and feels that there is a certain sweetness in life. But in my case, it was clear that the life was no longer sweet for me. However, if I were to commit suicide and die, I was afraid that I would get the birth of a devil. It was clear to me that after my death, funeral rites will not be conducted according to the procedures as specified in the scriptures. One day, I finished all the work that was entrusted to me in the cattle shed and was about to eat meals, but my daughter-in-law gave me stale food. The food was stinky, and I also found some vermin in the food. As I was completely tired after doing manual labour, the extreme pangs of hunger caused much more pain to me. I was too weak to even shed tears. I could not eat the stinky food, and I could not withstand the pangs of hunger.

"To me, who was in a most miserable state, a doubt cropped up in my mind whether this world, the people, and all these relationships were true, or whether all this was part of a great magic. My mind became dull and devoid of the power to think.

"Under such critical circumstances, an avadhūta gave me dārshan in the cattle shed. Compassion was flowing from his eyes like a big stream. The moment I saw the divine compassionate form, I started sobbing immediately like a young boy. I had the awareness that I knew him from thousands of years. I fell on the divine feet of the avadhūta and held them to my heart. The avadhūta touched the food with his divine hands. The food on the plate disappeared. In its place, there appeared on the plate a sweet preparation called halwa . The avadhūta took a small portion of the halwa and instructed me to eat the rest of it. I ate it with full satisfaction and regained vigour and strength.

"The avadhūta asked me to dig the north-eastern side of the house with an iron crowbar. After digging deep in that location, the skeletons of two dogs were unearthed there. I threw them out. The avadhūta told me to pour the porridge into the pit. I poured the porridge into the pit and covered it with mud. Then the avadhūta said that he purged the evil effects of the ghosts and that my house was purified. He told me that my conditions will improve gradually. He told me that I received a call from the Pādagaya kshetra, Pīthikapuram, and that I should start immediately. He assured that suitable arrangements will be made for me and that he will meet again in Pīthikapuram.

"I started for Pīthikapuram with the one outfit I was wearing at that time. I started immediately and did not inform anyone in the house. After I travelled for some distance, evening dusk approached fast. At that time, I was travelling through a mango garden. The owner of that garden, Narasimhappa, welcomed me. He offered me sweet fruits to eat. My hunger was assuaged after eating those fruits. He requested me to accept his hospitality for the night in his house and I agreed. The next morning, after I finished ablutions and morning prayers, he donated me clothes and offered some money to me as dakshina[1]. I was surprised to note that the arrangements were properly made as was foretold by the avadhūta. Then the farmer said, 'Sir, yesterday in the afternoon an avadhūta appeared in my dream and informed that a pious Brahmin would be going on foot through the garden. The avadhūta instructed me to give hospitality to that Brahmin traveller and to donate clothes and money the next day and to offer him mangoes to eat. I had the fortune of seeing you. I am lucky to be able to serve you.' The farmer was exuberant.

"From this episode, it was clear that the avadhūta had supernatural powers and that he was not an ordinary avadhūta. I continued the travel while reciting the Vedic hymns. I observed that an electric current was flowing through all my nerves while I was travelling dressed in new clothes and chanting Vedic verses. On account of the flow of electric power, I experienced ineffable joy in my body. I noticed that a Vedic pandit was behind me and was approaching me fast. He was reciting Sāvitripanna from the Vedas. I also joined my voice with him and started

1 Monetary offering

reciting the Sāvitripanna. Then the Vedic scholar said, 'Sāvitripanna is very important. In Treta Yuga[1], Bharadwaja Maharshi performed Sāvitra Kāthaka sacrifice[2]. It was performed in Pīthikapuram.

"According to the promise of Lord Datta given some time back, He has now incarnated in Pīthikapuram as Srīpāda Srīvallabha. The Vedas are approved by the Lord. Even though the authority for the recitation of the Vedas was given to the Brahmins only, authority to study them is given to all castes. Brahmins were worshipping Srī Krishna. What did Srī Krishna do? He was washing the feet of the Brahmins and was sprinkling that water on His head. You are very fortunate because you received the call from Pīthikapuram.'

"I then asked him who Srīpāda Srīvallabha was and that I wanted to hear about His greatness. The Vedic scholar said, 'My dear, dārshan of Srīpāda Srīvallabha destroys all sins. He is verily Srī Dattatreya. Pīthikapuram is His sportive birth ground. In ancient yugas, great people used to incarnate along with a main incarnation when the need arose. In previous ages, there was a pious couple named Susīla and Vishnu Datta. That great devoted lady Susīla was experiencing an identity with Mother Anasuya during her spiritual practices. She experienced labour pains on the day of Datta Jayanti[3]. Vishnu Datta, during his spiritual endeavours, was experiencing oneness with sage Atri. That state of the merger of different individual identities into one entity is non-physical, uncommon, beyond perception of the mind and intellect, a divine mystery, one which cannot be accessed through speech, and one which is inexplicable. They are now born as Sumatī Maharani and Appalaraja Sarma. Srīpāda was born as their child as a fruit of their intense penance in their previous lives. They belong to the Krishna Yajur Veda sect, Āpasthamba sūtra, and the lineage of Bharadwaja. Lābhāda Maharshi, a sage from the Vaishya caste of an ancient yuga, was born as Bhaskarācharya[4] during the time of the incarnation of Vasavī Kanyaka and as Bāpanārya, father of Sumatī Maharani, during the time of the incarnation of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. You will see those great pious peo-

1 The second of the four yugas
2 A ritual to the Sun
3 Birthday of Lord Dattatreya, celebrated on the full moon of the month of Margasira (Sagittarius)
4 The spiritual guru of the Ārya Vaishya community in the Brihat Sila Kingdom

ple in Pīthikapuram. The farmer who donated you clothes and money was working as a labourer in a previous birth under Subbarāmayya Sreshti, father of Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti in Pīthikapuram. As he had meals in the house of the extremely pious Subbarāmayya Sreshti, he has now become a landlord from those great merits and is now enjoying all comforts. Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti and Narasimha Varma of Pīthikapuram are very dear to Srīpāda. Those people have devotion of parental love towards Srīpāda in abundance.'

"I asked the Vedic scholar, 'Sir, I observed that the bonds of action are very complicated shackles. It is said that during the yagna, if the pavamāna ghatas[1] are broken, the head of the presiding priest will also break and that he will die. In the yagnas that are performed these days, if by accident anyone out of the three pavamāna ghatas is broken, the head of the presiding priest is not getting broken. What is the reason? If the things mentioned in the Vedas and scriptures, whether auspicious or inauspicious, do not happen, then the atheists will deride the Veda sāstras.'

"The great person replied, 'My dear, in the yagnas conducted in the present times there are no life-destroying materials like electric current etc., in the pavamāna ghatas. The officiating priest who conducts the yagna must be a great spiritual practioner. He must have the fire of yoga in him. Only that yogic fire will help generate the electricity in the pavamāna ghatas during the yagnas. If a great yogi presides and conducts the yagna, then immediate results will follow, which lead to the welfare of the world. Instead of that, if namesake exercises are done in the name of yagna, then we cannot derive the results enunciated by Veda sāstras. There is also a mysterious meaning in the monetary gifts of 16, 116 and 1116 numbers.

"Lineage relates to the father. This principle will not change as long as the Creation continues. Sāpindya[2] relates to the mother. This principle will be ceased after seven generations. A son and wealth are the two fruits of a marriage. To obtain these two, a fire called woman is essential. How will Srīpāda have caste differences when He does not even differentiate between attributes? He preaches non-dualistic perception; he does not preach non-dualistic action. Just like Ādi Shankara, Srīpāda has no partial-

1 Vessels used in sacrifices
2 Rules about marriage between relatives

ity. Ādi Shankara taught Hema Vidya[1] to the people of the gowda[2] caste who are of a passionate nature and who make a living by tapping toddy and who help others. Ādi Shankara did not teach this Hema Vidya to Brahmins who are sattwic in nature. In the same way, Srīpāda extends His grace to all depending on their eligibility and irrespective of their race, religion, colour and age. If Ādi Shankara taught Hema Vidya to Brahmins they would have turned into misers, would have gotten entangled in money and other enticements, and would have forgetten about their rightful duties. Mind, intellect, ahamkāra[3], and the five elements, including earth — these eight are called the inert natures. When combined with the nature of the animate world, which is represented by the number one, they become nine. Numbers two through nine represent the eight inert natures. Zero represents the Brahma tattwa[4]. Mathematics originated from numbers zero through nine, representing the activities of the rudimentary natures or Creation. Srīpāda used to jokingly ask for alms of two chapaties by saying 'do chowpati dev lakshmi'. This represents the numbers 2498. Many meanings can be found in His every movement and every word. Number two represents all pairs of opposites in the Creation; number four stands for the sthūla, sūkshma, kārana, maha kārana bodies[5]; number nine is the symbol of the changeless Brahma tattwa; and number eight represents Maha Māya. Srīpāda is Ardhanārīswara[6].

The cosmic form of Srīpāda

"I belong to the Penugonda village, which used to be called Brihat Sila Nagaram. I am called Ganapati Sastry. I came to Vāyasapura agrahāram[7] for pursuing Vedic studies. I was learning the Vedas by serving a guru. My guru had some fields near his house. He had a large number of livestock. I

1 The science of making gold; alchemy
2 Producers of palm wine
3 The ego
4 The highest truth; the best of essences
5 Sthūla: Dense physical body; sūkshma: subtle body; kārana: causal body; maha kārana: body of the self.
6 The half male and half female form of God
7 Kakinada

went to the field for grazing the cattle. One day, a ten-year-old boy of brilliant lustre came into our field in the guise of a cowherd. He was wearing a sacred thread over his neck. So, I presumed that he was a Brahmin lad and asked him for confirmation.

"Then that boy said, 'I am THAT I AM. All natures are in Me. The basis for all is I AM. It is not wrong if you presume Me to be a Brahmin on seeing My Brahmanic features, but that is not the complete truth. It is not untrue if you think of Me as a Kshatriya on seeing Kshatriya traits in Me, but that is not the complete truth. Upon seeing the features of a Vaishya in Me, it would not be untrue if I am considered as a Vaishya, but that is not the complete truth. It is not a mistake to think of Me as a Shūdra on seeing the traits of a Shūdra in Me, but that it is not the complete truth. Even if you think I am a Chandāla, it will not be a mistake, but it is also not the complete truth. I am beyond all limitations. I am beyond everything which appears as many truths and untruths and I am the support for all those matters. I am the superior truth. That nature of truth is beyond all boundaries. My dharma is supreme dharma. That is beyond all dharmas and is also their support. My nature is supreme love. It is at a great distance from all traits of love in all creatures of the Creation. Not only that. It is the base for all those things. If you consider Me to be a male, I will behave like a female. If you feel that I am a female, I will behave like a male. If you assume that I am God Shiva — half male and half female — I will prove that I am that divine bliss which cannot be perceived by mind or speech and which prevailed prior to the manifestation of those two forms. How can you know about Me, who has such peculiar characteristics?'

"I felt all the above dialogue was the delirious talk of a person who has high fever. I thought that when there is excess of bile, one would indulge in incoherent and mad prattle. The boy who observed my mental condition said, 'I just spoke with Sanīswara[1]. Sanīswara told Me: 'Oh Lord, witness this entertainment, see how I will harass Ganapati Sastry by throwing him in very strange entanglements and bonds.' However, I told Sanīswara that I am going to receive the consequences of the fate of Ganapati Sastry and that he (Sanīswara) cannot throw you into entangling shackles.'

1 Saturn

"On hearing those words, anxiety stirred up in me. In fact, a very bad period was transiting at that time according to my horoscope. When I was in a state of daze, the cowherd went to a cow and asked, 'Gayatri, I am hungry. Can you give milk?' That mother cow turned its head and expressed assent. Streams of milk started falling on the ground from its udders. The cowherd drank the milk to his full satisfaction. In reality, it was a barren cow, but it gave milk to the cowherd. All this was very confusing to me. That cowherd sat contented under a mango tree.

"When I saw him again, I noticed a ten-year-old girl wearing the outfit of a village belle with Him. They were giving joy to the onlookers. . Their merry conversations made them look like a happy couple. In the meanwhile, Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti got down from the horse carriage. A brilliant sparkling lad of ten years was with him. I learnt afterwards that He was none other than Srīpāda Srīvallabha. In memory of his father, Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti donated this land to my guru. Vast lands abutting this field were owned by Srī Sreshti.

"Srī Sreshti sometimes visited Vāyasapura agrahāram from Pīthikapuram to supervise his lands. Srī Sreshti was amazed to see the cowherd and the girl because they very closely resembled Srīpāda. In addition, they were very lustrous.

"Srīpāda said to Srī Sreshti, 'Grandfather, why are you so much astonished?' For that, Srī Sreshti asked Srīpāda to look at those two people and remarked that the scene was a feast of joy for the eyes. Then Srīpāda asked whether the one who sees and the scene that was being seen were one and the same. Srī Sreshti replied placidly that he did not know such philosophical matters.

"Srīpāda said, 'Grandfather, what philosophy is there in this? It is said that Srī Hari also became astonished on seeing the movement of His Māya, which has no limits. This Creation is filled with the nine types of emotions. One of the rules of the Creation is to produce surprising and wonderful scenes. There it is two; here it is one. Is duality true? Or is non-duality true? Am I one? Or two? Or many? Please think and tell.'

"With these words of Srīpāda, a doubt arose in Srī Sreshti whether the cowherd and the peasant girl were also the creation of Srīpāda. Srīpāda said while caressing the chin of Srī Sreshti, 'My dear granddad, why do you doubt? As long as your family does not forget Me, I and My Shakti will be

moving in your fields in an invisible form! Spiritual pursuers will certainly hear and experience the sound of My footsteps in your house! Srī Anaghā Dattatreya along with His consort Anaghādevi, concealing His Ardhanārīswara[1] form, is in your presence in the form of an avadhūta as Srīpāda Srīvallabha. Do not have any doubt. When I appeared before Mother Sumatī at first before I was born as her son, I told her resolutely that no attempt to marry Me should be made and if such an attempt was made, I would certainly leave the house. Since you are a rajarshi[2] who imprisoned Me with your bond of pure devotion, I showed you My form of Anagha along with Anaghādevi[3]. *No action will take place without a cause in the presence of Srīpāda. The process of the Creation is very, very strange. I will decide the actions, their consequences and the time and place of their occurrence. Imparting knowledge to the ignorant through My actions, sportive plays and miracles is part of My avatār's programme.'*

"Saying so, Srīpāda assumed the shape of a shining illumination and went towards the mango tree. While we were all witnessing, the peasant girl and the cowherd took the shape of a brilliant light and merged into Srīpāda. It is an impossible thing that mangoes grow out of season, but an unripe mango grew on that mango tree while we were watching. Srīpāda plucked it. The touch of His hand was so effective that it turned into a ripe mango while we all were watching. Just as a mother feeds her infant child with food or sweets, Srīpāda fed Srī Sreshti with that ripe mango. Srī Sreshti wept like a young boy while he ate the mango fruit. *The motherly love of Srīpāda was greater than the love of thousands of mothers put together. When compassion and love shower from His divine eyes, He looks very much like Mother Anagha, who is an embodiment of the three shaktis.* The stone of that mango fruit stood erect in the presence of Srīpāda, like a servant waiting for the orders of the master. With the hand gesture of Srīpāda, it then flew upwards. Even though it was in the form of a stone of the mango fruit, it changed into a lustrous entity.

"Srīpāda averred, *'Some people argue dogmatically whether the seed comes first or the tree comes first. However, there is one who was in existence before both of these. He is God. He can generate the tree from*

1 The half male and half female form of God
2 A royal sage
3 The trinity of Lakshmi, Parvati and Saraswati

the seed or vice versa according to His will. Even the Seven Rishis[1] *cannot imagine His inexorable resolve. Paramātma*[2]*, when tainted, is called jīva*[3]*. Taintless jīva merges in Paramātma.* When jīva merges in Paramātma, all his tendencies exist like fried seeds. Nevertheless, if Paramātma desires to bring jīva again into the cycle of Creation, no force can stop Him. However, when the jīvas who merged in Him are brought back into Creation, they become persons taking birth for a purpose and they perform the mission of God. At the end of their life, they again merge in Paramātma. Some jīvas do not like to merge in Paramātma but wish to remain in close proximity to Him and continue in that state of bliss. Paramātma can make such people to also take birth for a cause to execute the mission of God. At the termination of their life, they will remain in close proximity to Him without merging in Paramātma and will experience the divine bliss. Those jīvas who want to remain in a different state from Paramātma will take a purposeful birth and after completing the divine work, they will revert back to their previous position in the next birth. State of duality or superior duality or non-duality will be granted according to the wishes of jīvas. Therefore, it is not proper for the people to debate whether non-duality, or duality, or super-duality state is superior. Creation, sustenance and liquidation continue to happen at every moment. At the end of one kalpa Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra will rest in the state of unmanifest bliss of Paramātma. They will again return to a manifest state according to the maha samkalpa[4] and carry on Creation, sustenance and liquidation in the newly created universes earmarked for them.

"In the ensuing kalpa[5], Hanuman, who is a scholar of the nine different grammars, will become Brahma[6]. Jīvas are gratned their roles in the administration of the universe according to their faculties and qualifications. Therefore, universes in the Creation are many millions and the divine forces employed for their administration are also infinite. Demonic forces that act as impediments to the divine forces are also infinite.

1 Seven sages who are manifested in the universe as the seven stars of the Great Bear
2 Super-self / super-soul
3 The individual self or the soul
4 The great divine resolve
5 An age
6 The creator

"Mohammedans call the formless one with good qualities as Allah. Christians call the formless one with good qualities as Yehova. They name the indwelling consciousness reflected in the Creation as Jesus — the Son of God. They also call the heavenly consciousness that fosters peace, courtesy, love and compassion as the holy soul.

"I am the One who shines with self-effulgence as described in all dharmas, religions, and theories. I am the One who is perceived by different philosophies according to their preferences, tastes and the paths they follow. I am independent in all aspects and I am not subject to possibilities or impossibilities, therefore I do not have any specified policy. I shine forth with dazzling brilliance through all forms of gods and goddesses, therefore I am the One who receives all worships and panegyrics through those respective forms. I am the One who grants grace to all. When the illusion of Kali Purusha ceases, the knowledge that I am the embodiment of sanatana dharma[1], which is the quintessence of all religions, will dawn. An aspirant can reach Me either through external practices or through internal practices. I will always take care of the spiritual aspirant whether he is an external or an internal pursuer. I am the One who will call them with love.

"In the Vedas, it was also declared that the truth, knowledge and eternity are Brahman. I am the One who is the Satya, Jnana and Ananta Brahman[2]. I am the One who preaches to the atheist that there is no God. I am the One who extols about the existence of God to a theist. I am the embodiment of all gurus. I am the One who shines with self-effulgence in all states of spiritual pursuit such as Satya loka[3], Satya nama, Go-loka[4] and Maha sūnya[5]. *I will constantly take care of the welfare of those who adore Me with pure devotion, who cast all their burdens on Me and seek total surrender from Me. I am Srīpāda. I am Srīvallabha. Grandfather, the Srīpāda Srīvallabha that you see today is none other than the son of Anasuya and Atri of that most ancient yuga. I incarnated in Pīthikapuram in accordance with the promise made to Sage Bharadwaja.'*

1 The eternal Law
2 Truth, knowledge and eternal Brahman
3 The cosmic aspect of the Sahasrara (1000-petaled lotus) at the top of the head
4 The 8th plane beyond the seven planes of creation; the holiest plane
5 The great void beyond manifestation; THAT

"Tears of joy flowed down like a torrent from the eyes of Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti. He embraced Srīpāda firmly. The ecstasy he experienced was indescribable, and cannot be expressed through words. After some time, Srī Sreshti said, 'My dear one, my golden jewel! Kindly show your grace on our family; kindly keep your grace on our lineage! Kindly show your grace on our Ārya Vaishya caste!'

"On that request, Srīpāda said, 'Grandfather, let it be so! A Brahmin has the authority to ask for one boon. Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shūdras have the authority to ask for two, three and four boons respectively. I am granting the three boons asked by you. *I am making a solemn promise with the 330 million deities as the witnesses. Srīpāda Srīvallabha Maha Samsthan will be established in My name, in the house of My maternal grandfather Srī Bāpanārya, exactly at the place of My birth. During the time of the 33rd generation reckoned from you, during the 33rd generation of Srī Bāpanārya, and during the 33rd generation of Srī Narasimha Varma, I will Myself establish My Samsthan using a person belonging to your 33rd generation as an instrument for the purpose*. I am instructing Sage Markandeya, who is the founding father of your family, to receive some portion of the offerings made to Me in the afternoon of every Thursday in some form or the other. By this, let the persons born in the Markandeya lineage get benefit. *My grace will be on the* Ārya *Vaishyas as desired by you. I am blessing* Ārya *Vaishyas to have ruling powers. For that purpose, an* Ārya *Vaishya will become the ruler of the country of Bharat. He will visit Pīthikapuram. According to the prediction of a special nādi astrologer, he will receive My abundant grace. After that, many devotees from Nepal will come to Pīthikapuram to have My dārshan. My order is like an edict on a rock. No creature in the Creation can violate My law.*

"Grandfather, My victory bell will undergo a variety of changes and it will stay in the inner layers of the earth in the place where My idol will be established. As a mark of the arrival of the victory bell, some earthen pots will be found in the future in the excavations there. *Great merit is required to extend financial assistance to the Maha Samsthan that is to be constructed in Pīthikapuram. Financial assistance will come only from the individuals who were born in the* Ārya *Vaishya caste in some birth and who had some connection with Pīthikapuram.* Non-believers, fools, pedantic arrogant persons will demand proof for everything. *Desires will be fulfilled*

by the pārāyana[1] *of My hagiography. All obstacles will be removed if one participates in any noble activity connected with My Samsthan in Pīthikapuram. If I am worshipped with devotion on the occasion of My birth star Chitra, troubles from debts will be settled; marriages of young girls with suitable bridegrooms will take place; afflictions from devils, ogres, ghosts and other unseen spirits will be removed. Srāvana*[2] *Suddha Pūrnima was the sacred day on which Srī Vasavī Kanyaka tied rākhī to Me. Chitragupta*[3] *will grant great merit to those who stay in My presence in Pīthikapuram on that day.* I am an authority unto Myself. My biography is a standard by itself. My sportive plays are their own standard proofs. Is any other proof required to say that the Sun is the Sun?'

"The sportive pastimes of Srīpāda are impossible for others. On the next day, Vallabheswara Sarma couple, Subbanna Sastry, Linganna Sastry and I left for Kurungadda for the dārshan of Srīpāda. Srīpāda blessed us profusely. He said smilingly, 'Oh, what sort of discussions! What discussions! Much time had to elapse before the formation of Srīpāda Srīvallabha Maha Samsthan. When will the debt to Malladi's, Venkatappayya Sreshti's and Vatsavāyi's families be fully redeemed?' After saying so, He became silent."

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

1 Devoted reading of the book in a certain number of days
2 A month of the Hindu calendar; corresponds to the month of Leo
3 Assistant of the Lord of Death, who keeps the records of deeds

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 20

The Account of Vissavadhāni

Description of the divine auspicious form of Srīpāda

In the early morning, I reached Kurungadda to have the dārshan of Srīpāda. Divine rays of illumination were emanating from Him. Peace, compassion, love and knowledge were issuing forth as brilliant light from the divine eyes of Srīpāda. Those who were in His presence were receiving peace, compassion, love and wisdom, even without asking for it. When the Lord of all the universes, who is formless, assumed a form and appeared in the human form before my very eyes, ineffable joy and astonishment flooded my entire nature.

Srīpāda kindly beckoned me to approach Him and give salutations to Him. When He beckoned me, inexplicable waves of peace and love rose from His divine hands and I experienced as though they transported my mind, heart and body to some other unknown worlds. I touched His auspicious feet with devotion. My body felt lighter. I noticed that a dark aura emanated from my eyes. After some time, black lustre came out from all the organs in my body. This black lustre assumed an ugly human form. This form exactly resembled me. Srīpāda smilingly asked me, "Have you noticed who that black form is, which very much looks like you?" I replied, "Swamī, I noticed that the form resembles me, but I do not know why it came out of my body. I also do not know who that form is."

Then Srīpāda said, "My dear, that black shape is your sinful body. He is your sinful personality. Whatever remained in your body now is the pious personality. *In every human body, a sinful personality and also a pious personality exist. Liberation is the release from both sin and merit*. One who takes birth as a Brahmin must be righteous and must burn down his sinful body. Not only that, with the strength of his merit he must uplift

others. A Brahmin should mainly possess the attribute of sattwa[1]. He should carry out rituals for the benefit of others as prescribed by the Vedas and the scriptures and should collect from them only that much money which is necessary for his living. By receiving that money, he also takes on their sins automatically. He should burn those sins in the fire of his intense penance. Only such a Brahmin who lives like that is worthy of the word Brahmin. If this is not the case, then he is a Brahmin only on account of his caste. He cannot become a Brahmin endowed with Brahma jnāna[2]. People like My maternal grandfather, Srī Bāpanārya, and My father, Appalaraja Sarma, can be called noble Brahmins. *My maternal grandmother, Rajamāmba, and My mother, Sumatī Maharani, are very pious. By merely remembering such people, thousands of sins in the bodies of the living creatures will disappear immediately."*

Speaking these words, Srīpāda became silent for a while. He touched the centre of His eyebrows and stretched His right hand. A brilliant illumination rose from the palm of His hand. Sacred materials required for the fire ritual materialized at once. Gold, silver, some sweet fruits and flowers originated afterwards. Then the holy fire arose. The sinful person who came out of my body cried with great fright. With His eye movement, Srīpāda commanded the sinful person to fall into the divine fire and get reduced into ashes. The person fell into the fire rather unwillingly. Flames spread all over my body. I cried, "Swamī, I am being burnt! Save me! Save me!" A wave of light from the divine eyes of Srīpāda touched me. My body became cool. The fire of the fire ritual burnt the sinner. A variety of electric currents arose in my body. I was aware of the awakening of my kundalini. My pulse stopped. My heartbeat halted. I slipped into a state of trance.

It was afternoon. It was Thursday. Srīpāda took a bath and afterwards He was surrounded by the devotees. Srīpāda touched with His hand the food offered by the devotees as bhiksha[3]. He sprinkled the water from His kamandalu[4] on the devotees. Some food was placed along the eight directions as a sacrificial offering. With the musical voice of millions of cuckoos, He called me by name. He ordered all the people present there

1 Purity
2 Knowledge of Paramātma, the highest Self
3 Donation of food or money
4 Small pot made of wood, earth, metal or dried pumpkin used by yogis or ascetics

to take meals. He instructed me to come nearer to Him. He closed His eyes for a second. Later, He opened His eyes again and cast His looks on me. A silver vessel appeared in His hand. It was filled with a north Indian dish called halwa. Srīpāda liked this Halwa dish.

Srīpāda said, "Shankar Bhatt, My devotees tie Me with their bonds of devotion. I am only bound by pure care and devotion. In the house of Srī Sreshti, his wife Venkata Subbamāmba prepared this sweet for Me and took a vow that she would take meals only after I eat this sweet. Their granddaughter Lakshmi Vasavī tied rakshā-bandha to My hand. She said that the astrologers predicted that death was indicated in the horoscope of her husband. She observed a dīksha[1] that her husband should live long. She insisted that if it was true that she tied rakshā-bandha to Me, I should take the prasād[2] and bless her as a sumangali[3]. There was no other choice for Me. I blessed Chiranjīvi Lakshmi Vasavī as Lakshmi Sowbhagyavati[4] and granted her flowers, bangles and kumkum[5]. I brought along the halwa prepared with love by Venkata Subbamāmba, whom I regard as my maternal grandmother. This prasād will destroy great sins earned over many births. I will personally receive the prasād offered in the houses of my devotees through subtle rays. However, as this was cooked in the house of Srī Sreshti, it is maha prasād and therefore, I physically received it in person. You also take this prasād." I took the prasād. Who can describe the sweetness of that prasād? He threw some portion of the prasād into the sky. It went somewhere in the sky. He let some prasād slip from his palm. Then the earth there broke and gave way to the prasād. After the prasād went into the earth, the broken earth came back to the normal state.

The devotees who were present there also desired to have that prasād. The incarnation of Srīpāda will never disappoint anyone. Though the prasād was distributed to many, it was inexhaustible. In the meantime, a devotee by the name of Gurucharan, born in the Padmasali

1 A spiritual discipline to change one's behaviour and habits
2 Food given as an offering
3 A pious lady having a living husband
4 The blessing giving by the elders to a woman to be happily married with all round prosperity
5 A fragrant red cosmetic

caste[1], came there. Srīpāda gave the prasād to him also. Then He threw that silver vessel into the Krishna River.

Srīpāda observed, "Padmasalis belong to the lineage of Markandeya. For some reason, they became non-vegetarians. No action takes place without a reason in My presence. Gurucharanā! You have been offering Me naivedya[2] from many days. You are leading a pious life, seeking refuse at the lotus feet of Srīguru. Today you could receive the maha prasād from the hands of Srīguru. Explain to Shankar Bhatt about guru tattwa[3] as far as you know. In the afternoon, I will be in a yogic sleep and will travel to the subtle using the mind. No one should visit Me during this time. My rest should not be disturbed."

It was indeed the will of Srīguru that I should meet a great devotee named Srī Gurucharan! Srī Gurucharan made good progress in the path of yoga. I requested him to explain the nature of Srīpāda and make me gratified. Then Gurucharan began to expatiate, *"The formless, attributeless phenomenon whose great resolve resulted in the creation, sustenance and liquidation of countless millions of universes incarnated in the ancient yugas as Srī Dattatreya taking to a form and taking on attributes. That phenomenon has incarnated in this yuga at present in the form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. This incarnation is formless, but appears in a human form; attributeless, but appears as the one with attributes; a comprehensive form of all deities, but looks like a single deity. He is the ultimate destination for all paths of yoga. All forms of deities, who appeared to the sages through their individual practices and penances from the beginning of the Creation, are really the divine manifestations of Srīpāda.*

"In ancient times, sages had many divine powers. Vasishta used to perform rituals with havya[4]. Viswamitra and Jamadagni used to follow the procedure of performing rituals without havya. *Only the one who knows the secret of the mantras and the secret of that ritual is capable of doing the ritual, or not doing it, or doing it in a different way. Srīpāda is omnipotent. Since He knows the secret of karma, differences will be seen in*

1 South Indian caste of artisans traditionally occupied in weaving and textile business
2 Food offered to God before eating, without tasting it
3 The principle relating to guru
4 Offering made into a sacrificial fire

His treatment of different individuals. The power of love is superior to all other powers. Its strength is infinite. Bāpanārya or Narasimha Varma or Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti are endowed with peculiar yogic wealth. All the three had abundant and affectionate devotion towards Srīpāda. With the power of their love, they can compel Srīpāda to fructify any particular work. Srīpāda also has to yield to their wishes. *Srīpāda has a natural trait of seeing His mother in every woman. If anyone with a natural affection treats Srīpāda as a divine child and worships Him, Srīpāda will behaves like a small child in their houses.* This is the Maha Māya. It is a matter that defies logic that the attributeless and formless Parabrahman, who is repeatedly extolled as such by the yogis and wise men, should display His divine sports as a divine child in Pīthikapuram. For those who practise with the idea that God can only be obtained through the study of the Vedas and scriptures, through the paths of yoga, and jnāna, God can be experienced by them only through those paths. The experience of God is systematized through the scriptures. However, the experience of God can also be had through a route beyond the path of the scriptures. God is fully independent in all respects. The sportive plays of Srīpāda are not amenable for logic. They are unheard-of before."

Then I requested Srī Gurucharan, "Sir, how did you first get the dārshan of Srīpāda? Kindly give an account of it and make me blessed."

On that, Gurucharan said, "Oh pious Brahmin, you are very fortunate. On account of the merits earned in my previous births, I had the fortune of narrating to you the divine pastimes of Srīpāda in His very presence. You have the grace and compassion of Srīguru." Having said that, he briefly explained the way in which he had the first dārshan of Srīpāda.

"I was born in a family of devotees. Lord Datta is our family deity and I was worshipping Him from my childhood. There were lots of financial worries in my family. However much I prayed Lord Datta, my troubles did not diminish. On the other hand, they got worse. Some elders advised me that I did not have the grace of Lord Datta and that I should select another deity as the family deity and worship that deity, upon which my difficulties might be resolved. I also was contemplating as to which diety should be selected as my family deity so that my troubles would cease. With that thought, I slipped into sleep one day. In a dream, I saw a dreadful butcher. He was tending a herd of sheep with great love. He was

slaughtering some sheep every day with his butcher's knife. The knife in his hand evoked great fear in me. With a profound sound of rumbling clouds, He thundered, *'I am Datta! Whatever gods or goddesses you worship, all those belong to Me only! When you simply change the names and shapes of the deity you worship, I will not change. More than that, I will not leave you. You are My shadow. How can My shadow leave Me and exist separateley? I am the Great Resolve that administers the will of all deities and humans! I am the Brahman from which all incarnations of the God emanate! An animal caught in the mouth of a tiger may escape, but you, who were caught in My hand, cannot escape. Devotees of Datta should be like young lions and be not like cowards. I am like a lion. Young ones of the lion cannot have any fear of the lion. They will amuse their mother with their sports and capers.* It is certain that I will kill you with this knife. There is no one in all the three worlds who can save you.'

"I was crying madly with terrible fright. By this time, my dream shattered. Inmates of my house asked me about the matter. I told them about my dream. I wailed that I was undergoing penury as a result of some past deeds in some birth. Our financial difficulties got worse. I felt that it would be better if I die. Next morning a haridās[1] appeared before my house. There were wooden cymbals in his hands. He was singing the name of Hari. He kept on his head a vessel for storing rice. He was a strange haridās. He kept a small piece of audumbara tree[2] in the vessel. It is considered as a bad omen if rice is not offered to a haridās standing in front of the house. Therefore, I searched in the house for rice and offered the haridās a fistful of broken rice found in my house after much search. The haridās received the fistful of broken rice and said, 'Sir, last night a butcher murdered one Gurucharan, a devotee of Datta. However, the wonder is that the life force of that man left his body and settled in this audumbara plant. It is a standard saying that Srī Dattatreya resides at the foot of the audumbara tree. This plant is not an ordinary one. There is a great kshetra named Srī Pīthikapuram in the Godavari region. It is said that the self-existent Datta moves in that town in the guise of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. This plant belongs to the offspring of the audumbara tree in the house of the maternal grandfather of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. Plant this

1 A minstrel singing the glory of God
2 Very sacred Indian fig tree (Ficus racemosa)

in your house and derive all auspicious things.' On hearing this, my head reeled. I told the haridās, 'Sir, I am that Gurucharan. I was not murdered. I am a Datta devotee! I saw a butcher in my dream. He warned me that he would kill me with his knife. I heard that when a person dies and his body is not available, sticks of an audumbara tree are arranged like a corpse and funeral rites are performed considering the sticks to be the corpse of the dead person, but it is unheard of and unseen at any place that the life forces of a person are attracted into an audumbara tree and at the same time the life forces are retained in the person.'

The greatness of audumbara tree

"Then the haridās loudly laughed and said, 'It is true what you say! I don't deny it! The entire mystery of the Creation is known only to the Ādiguru Lord Dattatreya. Even the Seven Rishis[1] cannot understand what He proposes to do in the next moment. Such being the case, what are you? What am I? You are thinking that bodily death of a man is the only death. *When the period of death approaches, a sadguru may subject His disciple to terrible mental agony, horrible dishonours, unbearable troubles and losses and erase accumulated karma and grant him rebirth. An incarnation may subject His dependant to slight trouble and grant him rebirth. However, Srī Dattatreya attracts the life force of His dependants to the audumbara tree where He always lives and rescues the body of the dependant with the life force released from the audumbara tree. The ignorant dependant thinks that he is alive from the life force in his body, but the fact is that the life force emanating from the audumbara tree is conducting the bodily functions of the devotee uninterruptedly. The moment the period of death elapses, the life force issuing forth from the audumbara tree firmly establishes in the devotee and the devotee will live for some more time. The audumbara tree will remain perfect however much the life force may be released from it. The reason for that is Srī Dattatreya remains well established at the base of every audumbara tree in a subtle form.'*

1 Seven Sages who are manifested in the universe as the seven stars of the Great Bear

"All that the haridās told was strange to me. The haridās, whose name was Krishna Das, went his own way. I planted the audumbara plant in the backyard of our house and started taking care of the growth of the audumbara plant with great love and devotion. A distant relative of mine was trading silk clothes. He became old and he had no children. He had motiveless love for me. He began to stay in our house. He gave some money to me and advised me to carry on the business of silk clothes. He was also circumambulating the audumbara tree in our house and worshipping Lord Datta with great devotion. *Whenever any difficulties arose in our house, we used to solemnly go round the audumbara tree and present our troubles to that great tree. Our suffering was reaching Lord Datta. Our troubles were getting solved in unanticipated ways. The audumbara tree was acting like a bridge of friendship between us and Srī Dattatreya.*

"Sir, worship of the audumbara tree is a very important duty of Datta devotees. If an audumbara tree is in the house, it is as though Srī Dattatreya is verily in that house. However much the efficacy of the audumbara tree is described, it amounts to an understatement only.

Birth as a thorny tree as a result of sinful acts

"While going to Orissa state for business purpose, I fortunately reached Pīthikapuram and found the house of Srī Bāpanārya. At that time, Srīpāda was in the backyard along with Srī Bāpanārya. There was a thorny tree in their backyard. Srīpāda was carefully watering the tree. Bāpanārya said to Srīpāda, 'My dear, is it proper to take so much care of that thorny tree which is dear to you as if it is the Somalata[1] or Sanjīvini plant? It will grow whether you care for it or not.'

"Then Srīpāda remarked, 'Grandfather, this thorny tree is Vissavadhāni, who in his previous birth was in our street and ridiculed saying "Oh, the self-manifested Datta is born as the grandson of Bāpannavadhani! What a freak it is! What a great offence against God!" When My mother, My brothers and sisters and I dined in the houses of Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti and Narasimha Varma, this Vissavadhāni kicked up a controversy in the council

1 Soma plant

of Brahmins that the Malladi and Ghandikota families were depraved and violated the dharma and that the two families should be ostracized from the Brahmin community. This thorny tree is none other than that Vissavadhāni. "Is Srīpāda Dattatreya? What is the proof for it? Is it in the scriptures? Is it in the Vedas?" Vissavadhāni, who advanced such mean arguments, is this thorny tree now. Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti and Narasimha Varma regarded My divine mother Sarvamangala Swarūpini Sumatī Maharani as the daughter of their household and offered her meals and respected her by giving new clothes to her. By such reverential treatment to My mother, they used to feel that their lives were blessed. Vissavadhāni was abusing those two people every day. This thorny tree is that Vissavadhāni. Due to the omission of obsequies after his death and on account of his heavy load of sins, Vissavadhāni is now born as a thorny tree — quite appropriate to his nature. On seeing the old Vissavadhāni as a thorny tree, I took pity on him and am giving water to this tree.' Srīpāda thus concluded.

"After a short while, they came into the street from the backyard. On seeing the bewitching, charming Srīpāda, I broke into hiccoughs with overwhelming delight. Tears of joy flowed like floods from my eyes. I fell on the divine lotus feet of Srīpāda. Srīpāda touched me on the back with love and said, 'My dear, get up! What are these mad acts? You died, got back to life and came to Me.' Knowing that I do business in silk clothes, Srī Bāpanārya asked me, 'Do you have any silk dresses suitable for our golden lad?' I gave a silk dress suitable for Srīpāda. Srīpāda took me inside Srī Bāpanārya's house and told me, 'Gurucharanā, I will show you a wonder.' Srī Bāpanārya also followed Srīpāda. Srīpāda took us to the thorny tree and questioned, 'Grand old Vissavadhāni, you got this sort of despicable birth because your children performed obsequies without care and because you have abused great people like Bāpanārya for no reason. This Gurucharan was your son in your previous birth. I will make him perform your obsequial ceremony. Do you agree?' We were nonplussed. That Vissavadhāni, who as a ghostly spirit entered the thorny tree, replied clearly that there was no greater fortune than that. Srīpāda made me uproot the thorny tree completely. He instructed me to generate fire with two audumbara twigs in His hand. I took them from Him and generated fire by friction of those two small sticks. I burnt the thorny tree. Srīpāda directed me to take a bath.

After I finished the bath, Srīpāda gave me vibhūti[1] and asked me to apply it on my body and said, 'People think that Shiva rubs on His body the ash from the burial ground. Shiva applies on His body the ash obtained from the funeral of great persons, siddhas, maha yogis and great devotees after they die. They remain united in the circle of the aura surrounding His body. When animals such as a monkey, a snake or a cow die due to our inadvertence, we must perform obsequial rites to them. It is enough if we conduct their funeral and give food to the hungry. There is no need to conduct any ritual with mantras. Those creatures who had some bond of indebtedness to us in some birth die like that in our hands inadvertently. By burning their dead bodies with care, our residual karma will be destroyed. They will attain a noble position. In an ancient age, at one time, the world was facing difficulties with famine and scarcity. Unless there is an increase in the stock of cows, sacred materials like cows' ghī could not be produced. In the absence of yagna and other sacrifices, mutual cooperation arranged by the Master of the Universe between humans and celestials would go to waste. Dharma would get weakened. Humans could not live unless there was sufficiency of food. Therefore, Sage Gautama grew crops in his hermitage by the strength of his penance. He manifested the Godavari River to redeem his sin, which was accrued on account of killing a phantom cow. Therefore, the world is very much indebted to Sage Gautama. Ahalya, the wife of Sage Gautama, was a great devoted wife.

"'This Vissavadhāni was born in the lineage of Sage Gautama. The only connection between Sage Gautama and Vissavadhāni is that the latter's birth was in that lineage. Even though this is a very small bond of indebtedness, this event happened for the following reasons: In Treta Yuga[2], Sage Gautama also participated in the Sāvitra Kāthaka sacrifice[3] that was conducted in this Pīthikapuram; Vissavadhāni was born luckily in Pīthikapuram and not only that, he had My dārshan which is very difficult to get. The time has come when it should be known to the world that this Datta can grant nobler states with causeless compassion, even to an unworthy person. *Unless there is a bond of indebtedness with you, even a dog will not approach you. So, if anyone approaches you for help, help him if you can. If it is not possible, ex-*

1 Holy ash
2 The second of the four yugas
3 A ritual to the Sun

plain to him about your inability in polite words, but don't display unkind temperament. If you show merciless treatment, I, who is the indweller of all beings, will also be merciless towards you. It is a fact that I alone am the root cause for all this. That fact is as much true as you, this world and the entire Creation are true. I am the supreme truth, truth of all truths. In the Vedas also, it is said that truth, knowledge and infinity are the supreme Brahman.' Srīpāda elucidated these details in the above manner.

"I was looking with astonishment. Tears of joy were trickling down on the cheeks of Bāpanārya. Srīpāda wiped the tears from the cheeks of His grandfather with His tiny hands and said, 'Grandfather, in recent times you have been continuously contemplating about Me. Your birth is fulfilled! I will take the incarnation of Narasimha Saraswati exactly in your form. This is true.' Saying so, He placed His hand in the hand of Bāpanārya. Then Bāpanārya expressed a doubt, 'Srīpadā I have a doubt in my mind from many days. Shall I ask?' Immediately Srīpāda with smiles said, 'Grandfather, can there be a doubt to a person of your stature? Can a lad of ten years clear it? What a wonder! Even then I will try. Ask.'

Srī Bāpanārya asked, 'Are creation, sustenance and liquidation done by Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara respectively?'

Srīpāda responded, 'Yes.'

Srī Bāpanārya asked, 'Saraswati, Lakshmi and Parvati are the respective forms of the strength of them, is it not?'

Srīpāda responded, 'Yes.'

Srī Bāpanārya asked, 'Ādi Parāshakti[1] has created the Trinity and their Shakti forms. Is it not?'

Srīpāda responded, 'Yes.'

Then Srī Bāpanārya questioned Srīpāda, 'Then who are You?'

Srīpāda is a personification of all deities. He is the origin of everything.

"When a volley of these questions came out of the mouth of His grandfather, Srīpāda smiled charmingly and said, 'Grandfather, I granted a noble

1 The Supreme Goddess at the beginning of creation

position to a thorny tree before your eyes just now. It is needless to discuss whether there is any scriptural sanction or standard for My actions. I exist in all yogic states. A person who is a yogi in those respective states will definitely meet Me. Creation is not Māya. To think that this is all the Creation is indeed Māya. The whole Creation is pervaded by a simple divine consciousness. However, it is subjected to evolution in a variety of positions and states. This is the basis for this evolutionary process. As knowledge about time is received, the process of evolution rests in experience. This concept of time is conceived on account of the Sun, Moon and Earth. Sage Atri had the experience of three times (past, present and future) and three states[1] at the same time. Mother Anasuya was the great devoted wife who had the experience of the nature of non-jealousy[2] in the Creation. I have the experience of all aspects of Creation: sustenance and destruction; gross, subtle and mortal bodies; past, future and present at the same time. Therefore, I AM eternally present. Everything that happened, that is happening and that will happen is experienced at the same time by Me. In such a state, there is no wonder that the Trinity and the three Shaktis are in Me. It is a fact that the Trinity and the three goddesses of power were in Ādi Parāshakti prior to Creation. There is no difference between Me and the Ādi Parāshakti, but there is a finer point here. Since there was a great resolve that the entire Creation should come out of the womb of the Mother, the form of Ādi Parāshakti emerged. That was the form of Brahmayoni[3]. Only from that, the Trinity — Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva — as well as Saraswati, Lakshmi and Parvati came out. However, how did the will to create, or how did the will to plan the process of Creation in a particular fashion take place? I am that propelling force or the embodiment of that grand resolve. The advent of Ādi Parāshakti, the Trinity and the three Shaktis happened only according to that grand resolve. The form of that great resolve[4] is the personification of the highest Teacher[5]. This is a very secret matter. Whenever the highest resolve wills, it immediately occurs. To will and to fulfil take place at

1 Jāgrit, nidra and swapna — the states of consciousness, of wakefulness, sleep and dream; the 4th state is samadhi
2 Here: Anasuya tattwa
3 The genital organ or source for all life creation
4 Here: Maha samkalpa
5 Here: Paramaguru

the same time. I am the very primordial power that can inhibit all powers. Relationships between mother and child, father and son, husband and wife, brother and sister are unavoidable. The forms of gods and goddesses emerged to demonstrate the above sacred relationships as ideal ones. Jīva[1] is shakti existing in Māya. I am the Supreme Shakti transcending Māya. Only by yogic shakti, Māya shakti and Maha shakti can meet. The Trinity and the three Shaktis remain included in the worship of Ādi Parāshakti or original Datta. Only those who are rich in spiritual endeavours can understand these divine relationships, their natures and the experiences of the relevant states of spiritual progress.

'All the sins of those who adore Srīpāda are removed

"'It is useless to teach Sanskrit grammar to a beast. If an animal wants to learn Sanskrit grammar it should be liberated from that lower birth. It should be born as a human being and learn it from a competent person. *Since I have an internal connection with every creature I receive the tendencies, propensities and impurities from them. Daily through a holy bath and japa*[2]*, I burn those impurities and help towards the development of the living beings. In fact, there is no necessity for Me to worship. I attract into Me many evil influences of those who adore Me and conduct a brief worship of our family deity Kālāgni Shamana*[3]*. I dedicate the great result derived from that worship to My devotees. It is not possible to give any result without doing karma. Therefore, I perform penance and other great pious rites with this body. Since I am the infinite consciousness, I get instantaneous results for the rites performed. So, I transmit those results to My devotees according to their eligibility. That is why Mine is the form of* Ādiguru. *Just as a child is entitled to the properties of his parents, the disciples of a preceptor become heirs to the powers of penance of their guru.* In Bhagavad Gita also, it was mentioned that performance of action is inescapable.

1 The individual self or the soul
2 Repetition of the name of God
3 One of the sixteen avatars of Lord Dattatreya, as the fire of time

There is no end to My incarnation

"'I, Srī Datta, am easily accessible. Other deities grant boons after being satisfied with the penance performed by the devotees. *However, Datta — an embodiment of the guru-form phenomenon — is a compassionate one who by His strength of penance removes all evil forces and forces of misfortune that stand in the way of His devotees obtaining boons. Grandfather, that is the reason for calling Me smruti mātra prasanna*[1]*. I am the One who is in the form of all gurus.* As this incarnation took place, out of great compassion, as Paramaguru[2] there is no end to this incarnation. *As soon as I receive the call of the devotee, I will respond at once. I am waiting for the call from My devotee. If a devotee moves one step towards Me, I will take a hundred steps towards him. My natural trait is to protect My devotees like an eyelid protects the eyes and to guard them against all accidents and troubles.'* Srīpāda thus imparted these divine preachings to Srī Bāpanārya.

"Then, I requested that great preceptor, 'Great Lord, I heard something about Somalata[3] and Soma yāga[4]. Kindly tell me the details about them.' Then Srīpāda said that Somalata is also called Sanjīvini herb and asked me whether I wanted to see it. When I said yes, the Sanjīvini herb appeared in His hand. He presented it to me. That is in my pūja mandir[5] securely even today as His divine prasād.

"Srīpāda continued, 'These Sanjīvini herbs are available in the Himalayan mountain ranges, at Mānasa Sarovar, in Kashmir, at the birthplace of the Sindh River, at SrīShaila Mountain — the eternal abode of Lord Mallikhārjuna, at Sahyadri[6], at Mahendradevagiri, at the Vindhya mountain range, and at the Badari[7] forest areas. Lakshmana recovered from coma only through the efficacy of this herb. By rubbing it on his body, one can achieve the faculty

1 One who is pleased by mere remembrance
2 A supreme preceptor
3 Soma plant
4 Ritual where Soma is used
5 Room for worship and meditation
6 A mountain range in the Western Ghats, where there are many centres of pilgrimage
7 Badrinath; a holy place in the state Uttarakhand in India and an important pilgrimage centre

of air travel. It greatly helps in toning up muscles, enhancing the lustre of the eyes and the hearing faculty. Freedom comes from many diseases by using it. From its efficiency, any sort of fear or suffering from fire, water, or poison will not afflict. It also gives eight siddhis like animā[1] etc. This Sanjīvini plant will start sprouting one leaf per day beginning from the first day of sukla paksha[2]. On the full moon day, it will have fifteen leaves. Again, from the commencement of the next fortnight, krishna paksha[3], every day one leaf falls off and on the new moon day the plant dries up with all the leaves haven fallen off. When this small dried stick is wetted with water and kept in a room during the night, it will emit light. Wild animals stand guard to this Sanjīvini herb in the Sahyadri[4] mountain range, and at Bhima Shankara Mountains[5]. It can be recognized during the midnight of the new moon day, when it shines in heavenly illumination. My dear Gurucharanā, like this, there are about twenty-four varieties of divine herbal plants. All of them are very sacred. Divine forces reside in these plants. Therefore, these herbs are to be collected with utmost humility while chanting Vedic mantras. The names of these herbal plants are:

1.	Soma	9.	Swetan	17.	Gayatri
2.	Mahā Soma	10.	Kanaka Prabha	18.	Yestham
3.	Chandrama	11.	Pratanavan	19.	Pāvata
4.	Ansuman	12.	Lal Vrutta	20.	Jagat
5.	Manjuvan	13.	Karadīra	21.	Sākar
6.	Rajata Prabhu	14.	Ansavan	22.	Anistham
7.	Dūrvā	15.	Swayam Prabha	23.	Reyktha
8.	Kaniyan	16.	Rudrāksha	24.	Tripada Gayatri

“I took leave from Srīpāda and left Pīthikapuram.”

1 Ability to reduce the size of the body, sometimes even to the size of the atoms; one of eight main powers acquired by a spiritual person as listed in the Indian scriptures
2 The first half of the lunar month
3 The second half of the lunar month
4 A mountain range in the Western Ghats, where there are many centres of pilgrimage
5 In the Ghat region of the Sahyadri hills, where the Bhimashankar Temple with a Jyotirlinga shrine is located

After Gurucharan finished narrating this to me, permission for the dārshan of Srī Maha Guru was given and we were informed that the yogic mental travel of Srī Maha Guru was completed. We had His dārshan. We received fruits and prasād from the divine hands of Srīpāda.

Then Srīpāda said, "Both of you cross the Krishna River and go to the other side. Go to the Mānchala[1] village. The village goddess of Mānchala will bless you. After obtaining the blessing of that mother, return to Kurungadda. Note that I will be always observing you wherever you are and at whatever distance you are.

"In the future, Mānchala village will become famous world-wide. It becomes famous on account of the live samādhi of a great person[2]. The sportive plays of that great person will be wonderful. There is a Pīthikapuram in the subtle view just as there is a Pīthikapuram in the gross view. That subtle view is the golden Pīthikapuram. That is well established in the circle of the aura enveloping My physical body. Anyone who obtains My grace, irrespective of the epoch, country or time to which they belong, will have their consciousness well established in that golden Pīthikapuram. This can be understood by all those who have a yogic vision. Those who earn a place for their live consciousness in golden Pīthikapuram are really fortunate. I will follow them in each and every birth and will save them.

"My dear Shankar Bhatt, a great Samsthan in My name will be formed after many hundreds of years. My pādukas[3] will be established under the shade of the audumbara tree at My birthplace in the house of My maternal grandfather. The idols of Mine, the preceding incarnation and the next incarnation will also be established. I am imparting you with super-natural sight. Look!" Saying so, He touched Gurucharan and me at the centre of our eyebrows. We saw that beautiful scene and felt gratified. His will is superb; His sportive pastimes are strange. When we started our journey, He said, "A person of the essential traits of Vasishta will come as a priest for My Samsthan."

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1 Also called Manchale; today Mantralayam, Andhra Pradesh; the village goddess is called Manchallama

2 Srī Raghavendra Swamī (1595-1671); declared in 1671 before attaining samādhi that he will be with his disciples for 700 years

3 Sandals worshipped as holy

Chapter 21

Dhandiswāmi Visits the Kukkuteswara Temple

Necessity of purity of place and feeling for spiritual aspirants

In compliance with the orders of Srī Maha Guru, Gurucharan and I started on a visit to the Mānchala village. On the way, we talked about the sportive plays of Srīpāda. I learnt many matters relating to the spiritual education from Gurucharan. I asked Gurucharan, "Sir, Srīpāda said that a person having the trait of Sage Vasishta would come to His Samsthan as a priest. Who will that very fortunate one be? During which time will he come?"

Gurucharan said, "Shankar Bhatt, Srīpāda declared that after many centuries a great Samsthan would be established in His name at His native place. It is the will of Srīpāda that a great hermit would come to His Maha Samsthan as a priest. Without the divine will, great sages will not be able to arrive there. Meditation for long periods, worship, chanting of holy sacred mantras, and worship with devotion and diligence will purify the airy region there. *Waves of ideas are broadcasted in all the ten directions from the inner core of the universe. People with sacred feelings will accept the sacred vibrations. People with impure feelings will receive impure vibrations. When the waves of ideas at a particular place become extremely pious and powerful, that place will effortlessly attract, through many wonderful ways, great persons by touching their mental consciousness.* On the other hand, if waves of bad ideas are prevalent at a place, then that place will attract bad people by touching their mental consciousness in many strange ways. *Therefore, a spiritual seeker should reside in places that are pure. He should have purity of mind. He should have friendships only with such people. He should accept money or food only from those who have purity. Those who arrogate themselves to be great scholars in the Vedas and Vedanta cannot obtain the grace of Srīpāda. Scholars with moderate accomplishments but having unblemished minds will gain extraordinary benefits from Him.* I went to the great holy place Pūri Jagannadha in Orissa for

business. I found Srīpāda in the place of Lord Jagannadh's idol in the temple there. In addition to me, there were three or four devotees of Srīpāda in that temple at that time. He gave them dārshan in the forms of their chosen deities and then immediately appeared to them as Srīpāda. He taught them through silence that He is the embodiment of all forms of deities.

Destroying the pride of a Dhandiswāmi

"On the day we went to the temple, Dhandiswāmi, accompanied by his 108 disciples, came there. It is our tradition to salute the feet of great persons when we meet them. As soon as we saluted him, Dhandiswāmi lost his speech. We prayed to Srīpāda Srīvallabha to grant speech to Dhandiswāmi. Dhandiswāmi regained his speech immediately. When Dhandiswāmi's disciples knew that we were the devotees of Srīpāda, they started to argue with ill-conceived logic, 'Srīpāda is a black magician. His disciples are also black magicians. With their debased magic, they deprived speech to our Dhandiswāmi, but because our Swamijī is very powerful he regained his speech. Our Swamijī will expose the real nature of Srīpāda. Our great Swamijī will visit Pīthikapuram and will receive victory testimonials after defeating Srīpāda. The people of Pīthikapuram village will arrange us a grand victory ride on a chariot.' We could not reply. *As part of the divine sport of Srīpāda, the dependant will be thrown into very critical conditions and when he cries for rescue, he will be rescued in a very strange way. That is His habit of saving devotees. He is the one who creates the problems. He is the one who shows a solution to the problems and renders help. This sort of divine play is experienced by all Datta devotees.* After some days, Dhandiswāmi came to Pīthikapuram. Fortunately, I also came to Pīthikapuram, which was on the way of my journey, at the same time. There was no dearth of people in Pīthikapuram who had hatred and poisonous feelings towards Srī Bāpanārya, Srī Appalaraja Sarma and Srīpāda. Dhandiswāmi visited the deities in the Kukkuteswara temple[1]. They also saw the idol of the self-existent Datta. Dhandiswāmi said, 'The greatness of the self-existent Datta who is here is unbounded. The

1 Temple in Pithapuram mainly dedicated to Lord Shiva

self-manifested Datta made me an instrument to curb the arrogance of Srīpāda, who is puffed up with pride declaring that He is an incarnation of the Datta. Good days started in Pīthikapuram from today. You can now remain carefree.' Saying so, he created vibhūti[1], kumkum and other materials by his willpower and gave them to his followers. The Brahmins of Pīthikapuram went to the Kukkuteswara temple to bring Dhandiswāmi into the town amidst the chanting of Vedas.

"A public announcement was made in the town by the beat of drums, 'Srīpāda, who is claming Himself to be an incarnation of Datta, should realize His mistake and should prostrate before Dhandiswāmi. Srī Bāpanārya should personally present himself before Dhandiswāmi and beg for pardon. Srī Appalaraja Sarma should attend before Dhandiswāmi and should hand over the statue of Kālāgni Shamana Datta[2], which is being worshipped in their family through successive generations. He should submit himself to the punishment to be imposed by Swamijī.'

"The Ārya Vaishya council met under the presidentship of Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti. They resolved that Srīpāda, Srī Appalaraja Sarma and Srī Bāpanārya should not bow down to Dhandiswāmi and such misdeeds should not be supported. The assembly of Kshatriyas which was held under the presidentship of Srī Narasimha Varma passed a similar resolution.

"At that time, Srīpāda was resting under the shade of the audumbara tree in the house of His maternal grandfather. Srī Sreshti, who looked at His face radiating divine brilliance, shed tears with heavy grief. Srī Narasimha Varma, Srī Sreshti and Srī Bāpanārya sat silently near Srīpāda. Appalaraja Sarma sat motionless like a lunatic. Srīpāda, who is equal to Srī Krishna, woke up from sleep and said that He was hungry and that He would like to eat curd-rice. His maternal grandmother brought rice mixed with curd in a silver bowl. Srīpāda ate it with great haste. Srīpāda asked His grandfather to recite the Vedas. Appalaraja Sarma also participated in the Vedic recital. Srīpāda also joined them and chanted Vedic hymns. Narasimha Varma and Srī Sreshti listened to the melodious sacred Vedic hymns with profound delight. In the Kukkuteswara temple, lumps of curd-rice appeared on the face of the self-manifested Datta idol. As the priest cleaned them away, they kept reappearing. It was strange that the statue

1 Holy ash

2 One of the sixteen Avatars of Lord Dattatreya, as the fire of time

of the self-manifested Datta exhibited such a miracle. Dhandiswāmi, along with his disciples and the new disciples in Pīthikapuram, started from the town to go to the temple amidst loud chanting of the Vedas. They were taking steps, but the earth appeared to them to be expanding. For the onlookers, they looked like they were moving their legs but remained static unable to move forward. With this sort of peculiar feats much time elapsed. Seeing this wonder, people there were amazed. In the meanwhile, the Brahmadanda[1] that Dhandiswāmi was carrying broke into two pieces. Dhandiswāmi felt as if his spine was broken into two. He fell flat on the floor. This incident struck awe in the Brahmins of Pīthikapuram. They realized that Srīpāda was more powerful than Dhandiswāmi and that harbouring enmity towards Srīpāda would land them in troubles. But they did not know how to leave that place and reach their homes.

Moksha comes from destruction of moha

"In Pīthikapuram, there was a resident called Abbanna. He made his living by catching snakes and displaying them to the public. At that moment of time, he came to the house of Srī Bāpanārya and performed the magic with the snakes. Srīpāda asked the Vedic recital to be stopped. Abbanna was fed to his full contentment. Srīpāda called on Abbanna and instructed him, 'Fill your pot fully with water and take it from here and go to the Kukkuteswara temple. There are some great sinners in the Kukkuteswara temple, who for no reason abused the incarnation of the Lord Datta who is moving in Pīthikapuram with a human form. Due to the sin they committed, Chitragupta decided that they should take the birth of ghosts after death. I spoke to Chitragupta and worked out a method to nullify that sin. Mother Earth is also enraged by these sinners. Go to the temple and request Her as My word to become calm. If those who want to have the dārshan of Srīpāda express their consent, sprinkle this water on them. Go to the house of mādiga[2] Subbayya, who made the announcement with the drum beat, and take him with you. Take out the curd-rice from his pot and distribute it to all those as maha prasād.'

1 Staff carried by ascetics
2 Cobbler caste

"Abbanna and Subbayya went to the temple and brought all of them to the house of Srī Bāpanārya. Srīpāda in a furious form thundered, 'You! You were very proud that you were Dhandiswāmi? You are an incorrigible idiot who cannot even recognize Datta whom you adore and who is in the form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. You have a group of disciples with you. They match you in foolishness. Besides, you have a new set of disciples in Pīthikapuram. What can you do to Me? What is your existence before the sole power that rules all the Creation? What is your capacity? You and all those who depend on you committed great sin because all of you abused the divinity. Chitragupta decided that all of you should live like ghosts for many hundreds of years. Because of My unstinted compassion, I cancelled it. It was resolved that you should face difficulties in very low births even after taking human birth. I withdrew it also with a very small amount of punishment. The form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha is like a blazing fire. Playing with fire will lead to accidents. Think of what salvation is when Myself and My Māya are indivisible. Moksha[1] is destruction of moha[2]. If any living person desires to experience pure bliss, I Myself will grant it if he deserves it. It will also be granted if he wants to remain as an embodiment of happiness in an exalted state of heavenly bliss, transcending Māya. In My view, there is no difference between the attributeless one without a form and the one with a form having attributes; and between liberation and bondage. Countless new worlds are created, maintained and destroyed every moment. There are no limits or bounds to the supreme states or splendid blissful states of existence which can be attained by the living persons. Those who want to come to Me after death will definitely come to Me. My will decides as to how many hundreds of divine years they would remain in those states, and when they would be sent back. I am the director of this devious drama and at present I am in the shape of a man before you. You are seeing Me. I came down from the highest state to this human form to inform you that I will be always looking after you even when I am in My formless state. The yogic powers of great yogis must be employed for the welfare of the world. The world does not mean only this Earth. *It is your duty to help the helpless people who are in a lower position to you.*

1 Liberation
2 Ignorance, illusion

"I incarnated to preach the paths of dharma, karma, yoga, bhakthi and jnāna. I am the sole truth, the origin of all truths. I am the sole dharma. I am the origin of all dharmas. I am the single cause creating all causes. Nothing will be formed in this Creation without My will. Without Me there is no Creation. You exist because I exist; so also, the Creation. What else can be said about the truth? Go to the Himalayas and undertake penance without any attachment. Do not collect disciples. Even if you do not get liberation or upliftment, there is no loss to Me or to the Creation. The activities in the Creation will continue to be carried out as required. This is the real matter. The procession of the Pīthikapuram's Brahmins following you is like the opera of donkeys in the marriage of camels. While the donkeys praise the beauty of the camels, the camels praise the melodious music of the donkeys. Even though they are indulging in mutual admiration, the reality remains to be something different.' Srīpāda made this beneficial preaching."

Relationship between Arundhati and Vasishta

I asked Gurucharan, "I heard that Mother Arundhati was born in the caste of Pariahs. How did she marry Sage Vasishta?" Then Gurucharan narrated the episode, "In the ancient times, Sage Vasishta did penance for thousand years. At that time, a Pariah girl named Akshamala served Vasishta in accordance with her eligibility. The sage was pleased with her service and asked her to request a boon. She requested Vasishta to be her husband. Vasishta questioned, 'I am a Brahmin and you are a Pariah woman. How can the marital connection between us be proper?' Then she replied, 'You asked me to request a boon. I thus requested. You can grant me the boon if you desire so. If not, please permit me to leave.' The sage was afraid of breaking his promise and asked her if she would agree with whatever he would do with her body. She agreed. The sage reduced her to ashes and again brought her to life. He did like this for seven times. As all the impurities of the low caste birth were purged by the seventh birth, she became extremely pure. Then Vasishta married her. Since she did not obstruct even slightly to the rituals conducted by her husband, she became famous under the name of Arundhati. Srīpāda told this to Narasimha Varma who was from

the lineage of Vasishta. A person born to a Shūdra lady through a Brahmin can be considered to be a Brahmin in his seventh birth by the investiture of the holy thread. It is better that all the four castes follow their respective duties according to the divisions ordained. *On account of bad actions, a Brahmin may gradually fall down and turn into a Shūdra. A Shūdra, by performing good deeds, may gradually rise up and become a Brahmin. However, those who repose unshakable faith in Lord Datta will achieve exalted positions quickly according to their eligibility. Lord Datta can grant longevity, health and wealth required for a comfortable life to His devotee, irrespective of the caste in which he was born or the conditions under which he lives. It is a natural play for Srīpāda to cut the bonds of karma of many births and accord an elevated position to His devotees."*

The assurance of Srīpāda to Datta devotees

We reached the Mānchāla village while speaking among ourselves about the glory of Srīpāda. The village goddess of Mānchāla granted us her divine dārshan and blessed us. She fed prasād to us with Her holy hands and remarked, "Srī Dattatreya, who was the preceptor to Prahlāda in ancient times, is today living on the Earth in the form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. The will of Srīpāda cannot be comprehended. Srīpāda personally told Me that in the coming centuries, Prahlāda will incarnate as Guru Sārvabhūma[1] and that this place will become famous as Mantrālaya. He will daily take the water of the Tungabhadra River. May you have auspicious developments." Saying so, she returned to Her former form. When we were about to move from there, a māla-dāsari[2] named Krishna Das came there. The village goddess of Mānchāla gave prasād to Krishna Das and gave him a flower garland as a token of Her grace and instructed him to go to Kurungadda.

We three started our journey to Kurungadda. All Datta devotees belong to one caste. The prasād of Lord Datta is acceptable to them without regard to the caste to which the person offering the prasād belongs. The association of Krishna Das with us infused new enthusiasm. During our conversation, he said, "If the significance of the different numbers 16, 116

1 The Emperor
2 A Pariah mendicant who is a worshipper of Vishnu

and 1116 which are offered as dakshinas is known, then the meaning of the number 2498, the number of Srīpāda, will be understood. Just as the world emerges from ātma[1], children are born from the father. At the time of marriage, the bridegroom prays to the Fire God, 'Oh Agnihotrā, grant me the birth of ten children in this bride.' He becomes the eleventh child. Begetting ten children is approved according to the dharma. Afterwards, his wife has to be regarded as the mother. A son is considered one-tenth part of the father. When ten people each having one-tenth of the value are combined, then the full number of the father is formed. Since Shiva is the personification of ātma, He is revered as complete. When the sixteen one-tenths are divided by ten, then it will result in the full number, one, representing Shiva. Six remains as the remainder. Vishnu is the personification of the original nature with the form of Māya. Nature is one-half of Purusha. So, half of ten is five and when the above remainder six is divided by five then the full number one is derived, representing Vishnu, and one is left as the remainder. Brahma is one tenth of the fraction of Shiva and Vishnu (Purusha and Prakriti) as their offspring. So, when the above remainder one is divided by one, the full number one representing Brahma is arrived as a result. There is no remainder left.

"Pūrnam means zero. It is attributeless and so it is the form of Rudra[2]. When everything is liquidated, you can only see the great space. Only in the great space it is possible to liquidate everything. The form of Vishnu has the characteristic of infinity. In the nature of the existence of the Creation infinity is unavoidable.

Srīpāda possesses sixteen brilliant potencies

"My dear Shankar Bhatt, if one thing is broken into countless pieces, every piece becomes a void. Only when such voids are assembled incessantly a limited shape is formed. Therefore, know that both Shiva and Kesava[3] are not different. In the above decimal division, from the remaining six one-tenths which was the remainder after dividing by ten,

1 The self, the soul
2 The Lord of Cosmic Will and Vibration
3 A name for Vishnu

five one-tenths was taken as the form of Vishnu. The Creation made up of five elements is considered as the form of Vishnu. Vishnu told Vīrabhadra[1], who destroyed the Daksha Yagna,'The fundamental nature assumed the form of Parvati[2] for the enjoyment of Īswara[3], the form of Durga at the time of the battle with the demons, as Kālika Devi[4] in Her angry mood, and the male form as Me. This is the underlying idea in declaring that Srīpāda is Shodasa Kala Paripūrna[5].' He left Pīthikapuram at the age of sixteen. Since He is an embodiment of Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra, it should be known that He is a Shodasa Kala Paripūrna.

Different forms of deities

"As Vishnu is the embodiment of nature, five one-tenths represent Vishnu. As Brahma is the son from the yogic union of Parvati and Parameswara[6], His is one-tenth form of Shiva. The reason is very clear. Shiva, who is the form of consciousness, is important. Since the form of Vishnu represents the illusory universe, it is not important. Therefore, Brahma is one tenth of Shiva. Number one is the symbol of Brahma. This single digit is spread in the numbers two through nine, in the Ashta Mūrthis[7]. So, Brahma got the shape of the ninth Prajapathi[8]. In the three numbers 16, 100 and 1000, the last two numbers were specially calculated and when 16 is linked with them, they became 116 and 1116. If these are divided by ten, they become symbols of all things in the Creation. The number one represents Rudra; the two full numbers eleven stands for Vishnu, the three full numbers 111 represents Brahma. 16, 116 and 1116 are called shodasādi tridakshina[9]. It was said that those who donate tridakshina (three types of dakshina) will

1 A being created by Shiva who according to Hindu mythology destroyed the sacrifice of Daksha, a son of Brahma
2 The wife (power) of Shiva
3 The universal soul
4 Mother Kali
5 A perfect embodiment of sixteen brilliant potencies
6 The highest God
7 Eight attributes of Shiva
8 Here: Nava Prajapati; the prajapatis are a group of deities of procreation and protection of life
9 Three types of monetary gifts having sixteen as an integral number

get the knowledge of Brahma[1]. It amounts to donating body, money and mind when the three types of dakshinas[2] are made. When money equivalent to those above figures is donated, the donor would derive the result of gifting the entire world. Pindānda dāna (donating the body) represents the world. Our body is in the form of three sacrifices. Sacrifice in the early morning, midday sacrifice, and the third sacrifice are called the Gayatri, Tristhup, and Jagati Chandas[3], which have specific number of letters as required by the representative metres. It means that Gayatri has twenty-four letters, Tristhup has forty-four letters and Jagati has forty-eight letters; the sum total of these comes to 116 letters. Therefore, by the pindānda dāna[4] the above result from the monetary donation will also be derived.

The incarnation of Srīpāda is the result of Savitri Kathaka sacrifice

"It is the brilliant light residing in the middle of the region of the Sun[5] which prompts all intellectual traits. That is Mother Gayatri. She represents number twenty-four. Number nine is the form of Brahma and number eight is the form of Māya. Sage Bharadwaja conducted the Sāvitra Kāthaka Chayanam[6] in Treta Yuga[7] in Pīthikapuram. In accordance with the promise made on that day, the form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha has manifested now in Pīthikapuram. He was seeking alms calling 'do chowpathi dev lakshmi' indicating that He is the form of shakti and the form of shāktha having Ardhanārīswara[8] personality and that He is the great incarnation provoking the intellect and natures of the living beings to put them on a righteous path. No one knows His sportive pastimes and the grammar of His teaching methods. As He is the author of this new grammar, it is known only to Him."

I heard so many things from Krishna Das. I learnt many more new

1 Here: Brahmajnāna
2 Gifts
3 Three forms of Vedic metres
4 Gift of body
5 Here: Savitru Mandala Madhyavarthi
6 A ritual to the Sun
7 The second of the four yugas
8 The half male and half female form of God

things. Those who have arrogance arising from scholarship can never receive the grace of Srīpāda.

Krishna Das started telling again, "Srīpāda is all-pervading from ant to Brahma. Once Srī Varma was taking rest in his fields along with Srīpāda. Many cobras came there. Srīpāda strangely removed the hood of each cobra from its body. He threw them all in heaps nearby. Many big ants, which no one saw before, gathered there. Srī Varma was sleeping. Srīpāda killed all those ants so that the sleep of Srī Varma was not disturbed. Srī Varma woke up after some time. He pitied the ants, which lay dead. Srīpāda said with a smile, 'A king should save his servant. This is a regulation of the nature. There is a strange king to these strange ants. He is coming soon. Look!' In the meantime, a big white ant came there with a strange colour. It went around all the dead ants. All the dead ants came back to life. Srīpāda, with a smile said, 'This ant king has the power of Sanjīvini. With that power it rescued all its ants. Many such wonders are in the Creation. Grandpa, if you wish I can show such miracles every moment.'

"Narasimha Varma was astonished to see the dead cobras. He noticed that it was also the work of Srīpāda. Then Srīpāda joined the hood of one cobra to the body of another cobra and stroked it with His divine hand. Like that, He granted life to all the cobras. They came back to life and left after circumambulating Srīpāda.

"Who knows why those cobras came and why Srīpāda treated them like that! When I inquired Srīpāda about this matter He observed, 'When the strength of the Rāhu planet[1] is not adequate, people will face obstacles in all their work. They will experience as if they are in the firm grip of a python. This is called by some as kāla sarpa yoga. Rāhu is the presiding deity of serpents. The serpents causing such obstructions are invisible to our eyes. I was destroying these obstacles in that way and causing comfort and happiness to My devotees.'"

We reached Kurungadda safely. Srīpāda blessed us with a charming smile.

1 The North Node

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 22

The Story of Gurudatta Bhatt

Srīpāda alone can confer the results of the horoscope to His devotees

Gurucharan, Krishna Das and I remained in an inexplicable elated exhilaration in the presence of Srīpāda. An astrological pandit named Gurudatta Bhatt came for the dārshan of Srī Gurudev. Srīpāda treated him with utmost cordiality. We were asked to conduct a satsang[1] at a peaceful place. Our conversation turned towards the astrological science. I questioned Srī Bhatt, "Sir, will the results indicated in the astrological science definitely happen? Or is it possible to have changes or additions in the results? Is human life conditioned by past karma? Or is it controlled by human effort?"

Then Srī Bhatt explained, "The wheel of Bha means the path of the stars. The starting point for it is the Ashwini star. It is difficult to recognize the sphere of the Ashwini star. There are two methods to locate this star. They are Chaitra[2] paksha and Revathi paksha. The Revathi star's brilliance is eight points below the potency of what is required, so it is not an acceptable method to locate the Ashwini star. The Chitra star, which is at 180 degrees from the Aswhini star, is conspicuous as a single globe and shines forth brilliantly. When six zodiacal signs are added to it, it will indicate the position of the Ashwini star. Therefore, Chaitra paksha is accepted as a method to locate the Ashwini star. The Ashwini star is proved as consisting of three spheres as Turaga-Mukha Ashwini Sreni[3]. There is a special reason for the birth of Srīpāda in the Chitra star. The Ashwini star, having three globes and looking like one star, is also His form. It is the beginning of the Bha wheel. That is His form of Dattatreya. His very first incarnation was that of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. His birth star Chitra is exactly at 180 degrees,

1 A group gathering with a spiritual teacher or a wise person
2 Nakshatra constellation in the month of Aries
3 Row of Ashwini stars with the faces of horses

in straight line, from the Ashwini star. The strength of any planet or star will be concentrated at a point of 180 degrees distance. Human beings take birth in a mathematically appropriate arrangement of planets which is in consonance with their past karma. Planets do not have love or hatred towards the human beings. Different rays and different vibrations emanating from them have the power to create relevant incidents at appropriate times and at appropriate places. To escape from the undesirable results of negative incidents that might happen, we must possess vibrations and rays capable of arresting and defeating those negative vibrations and rays. This can be achieved by mantras, tantras, meditation, prayer and similar methods or by our personal yogic power. However, if the karma of the previous births is extraordinarily strong then the above-mentioned procedures will not work. Under such circumstances, only Srīpāda can rewrite the writings on our forehead[1]. For Him to revise the writing on our forehead, there must be some situation wherein some benefit will be gained by the world through us. This will not happen under ordinary circumstances. Srīpāda will not interfere unnecessarily in the programmes of the Creation and in the activities of the deities of fate. *Nevertheless, the suffering of a devotee will move Srīpāda. Due to the force of the great influence of love and compassion that swell from the heart of the Lord, the strength of the deities of fate will become weak. Fate is inert. Srīpāda is the consciousness personified. When He feels it is necessary, He will turn dust into sky and sky into dust and will display His capacity for reconciling the irreconcilable. This is a very natural thing for Him.*

Srī Bhatt continued, "In my ignorant state, I was under the illusion that I was a great scholar in astrology. I belong to Karnataka. I cannot speak fluently in Telugu. I can communicate freely in Sanskrit. Luckily, I went to Pīthikapuram. I heard from some people about Srīpāda Srīvallabha. Our family deity is Srī Dattatreya. I visited the self-existent Datta in the Kukkuteswara temple,[2] which is the Pādagaya kshetra[3]. I worshipped Datta with devotion and diligence. When I was in meditation, I heard an inner voice clearly, 'You fool! How long ago did you die? You are bragging that

1 It is said in the Indian scriptures that at the time of the birth of a being, Brahma inscribes its destiny on its forehead based on its past karma
2 Temple in Pithapuram mainly dedicated to Lord Shiva
3 Pithapuram, the place where the feet of the asura (demon) Gaya fell

you are My devotee! You are giving camphor Harathi[1] to My face and driving nails in My feet. Have you come here to drive nails into My feet at Pādagaya and see My blood?' I heard these words repeatedly. As I was an astrological pandit, I made calculations of my horoscope. I was in the presence of the self-manifested Datta in the Pādagaya kshetra at the exact date and time at which I should leave the body. I tried to feel my pulse. The pulse stopped. I tried to feel the beat of my heart. It also was not working. I saw my face in the mirror. Instead of life symptoms, symptoms of death were prominent in the face. While laughing, I looked at my face in the mirror. What was there to be proud of? It looked like the laugh of the corpse with an ugly aura of a ghost. The priest in the temple of the self-manifested Datta was a very greedy one. I could see his subtle body. His subtle body had more ugly features than mine. The discriminating power that was hidden in some corner of my personality awakened. I understood that my sorrowful condition would not be removed unless I had the dārshan of Srīpāda. Deities are the personification of perfect bliss. They are in an exalted bliss state even if they do not have the heartbeat and pulse movement. My position was much worse. There was no happiness to my soul. On the other hand, there was heavy sorrow. When the soul departs from the body, the troubles of the body will come to an end; but my soul did not leave my body. However, my heart stopped functioning. Srī Gurudev created a peculiar situation for me. I realized how I got deceived by hearing the words of the most despicable people and sinners. The misleading mischievous statements such as, 'It is said that Swayambhū Datta,[2] who is in a stone in the temple, incarnated in the house of the Ghandikota family; if it is true, then a stone will not have the pulsation of the nerves and heart. But Srīpāda has the pulsation of the nerves and heart. It is said that on Mahālaya Amāvāsya[3] — a very sacred day for ancestor manes — an avadhūta[4] came and took bhiksha[5] from the Ghandikota family. It is said that He was none other than Dattatreya and that the Supreme Lord is now born as the maternal grandchild of the Malladi fam-

1 Light ceremony for worshipping God with fire
2 Self-born form of Lord Dattatreya
3 The last day of the fortnight of descending moon phases in the month of Aswayuja (September-October) is celebrated as the day of ancestor worship
4 Persons liberated from karmic bondages, beyond ego-consciousness and duality
5 Donation of food or money

ily. What a wonder! What a deceit! What a fraud!' — Listening to all these statements resulted in my forfeiting Srīpāda.

"I quickly ran to the house of Srīpāda. Srīpāda, aged ten years at that time, came out into the street and reprimanded me, 'Come, oh fool! To give nobler states to useless fellows like you who pretend to be alive but who are already dead, and to devils that are in the human form, and for the sake of your ancestors who are undergoing terrible troubles in Raurava[1] and other hells on account of your misdeeds, a being in the guise of an avadhūta came to this holy house on a Mahālaya Amāvāsya day and sought bhiksha. Do you know who it was? It was none other than Dattatreya. Do you know who Dattatreya is? It is Me, whose name when mentioned hordes of rākshasas[2] and devils shiver with fear. I am that Datta. I turned you into a rock but kept your hunger and thirst intact. I removed your prana,[3] but kept the appearance of an alive man. Let us decide afterwards whether I am Datta or not. First tell me this. You are really dead. But, is it proper for you to deceive people that you are alive?' When He questioned me in that thundering voice, I trembled violently with fear. In the meanwhile, Sumatī Maharani came out of the house. She was struck with fear on seeing me and shouted, 'Kannayyā! Who is this aghori[4], with the symptoms of a corpse? Come inside! I will neutralize the effect of the evil eye of this aghori.' Then Srīpāda said, 'Mother, this person has not become an aghori as yet. He is going to take birth as an aghori wherein he will burn corpses and eat them. He came to Me prior to that ensuing birth. Mother, give him some chaddi-anna[5] that is left behind.' Srīpāda requested His mother.

"Akhanda Lakshmi Sowbhāgyavati Sumatī Maharani had kept some chaddi-anna or taravāni-anna[6] for Srīpāda. Srīpāda gave me that taravāni-anna and asked me to leave the place. I ate that taravāni-anna in an open place opposite to the Kukkuteswara temple. As soon as I ate it, my miserable state vanished. I went again for the dārshan of Srīpāda, but Srī

1 The hell for humans who harm other living beings; the beings hurt by such a man take to the form of serpent-like beings and torture this person.
2 Demonic beings
3 Subtle vital force of air
4 Member of an extremist sect of devotees of Shiva, who conduct rituals, etc. at burial grounds
5 Cooked rice stored in buttermilk overnight
6 Rice soaked in sour or fermented rice water stored overnight

Sreshti took Him to their house. Srīpāda was in the grocery shop of Srī Sreshti. He was personally receiving varahās and putting them in the cash box. Srī Sreshti was personally measuring corn and rice and giving them to the customers. Srīpāda asked, 'Grandpa, today is the day to settle accounts! How much dakshina will you give to My father? How much dakshina will you give to Me?' Then Srī Sreshti replied, 'Little lad, that which is given to your father is a monetary gift to a scholar and that which is given to you is a money promised by vow to Lord Venkateswara. There is no bargain between us. You can take whatever you want. You have to give me what I want.' What an enchanting spectacle was that! Srīpāda took a small piece of jaggery and put it into His mouth. He gave me another piece of jaggery as prasād. Srīpāda said, 'Grandpa, the Ganesh pūja conducted by Me is now finished. Ganesha has put the piece of jaggery in His mouth as naivedya. If you want proof, you can see My mouth.' Saying so, He opened His mouth. What great vision Srī Sreshti then had is not known to us, but after a while Srī Sreshti said, 'My Golden Lad, tell Him that whenever He feels hungry, Ganesha can take as much jaggery as He desires as naivedya without asking me.' In the meanwhile, Akhanda Lakshmi Sowbhāgyavati Venkata Subbamamba came and took Srīpāda for anointing bath."

Gurudatta Bhatt said, "My dear Shankar Bhatt, Srīpāda thus saved me from the misfortune of being born as an aghori since I was spoiled by hearing the words of crooked people. If I was merely left to my fate, I would have completely fallen down. On account of their pure love for mankind, Sadgurus skillfully free us from the consequences of the fate acquired from prior births. For this, they spend their valuable power and time.

"The horoscope of Srīpāda will need to be calculated according to the Sāndra Sindhu Veda[1]. It cannot be approached through ordinary mathematics. Tithi[2], day and stars will also be in accordance with the Sāndra Sindhu Veda. Srīpāda, Srī Appalaraja Sarma, and Srī Bāpanārya used to speak in Sanskrit along with Telugu in their house. They also used to speak in Sandhya[3] language, which was in use in the Himalayas in the

1 A mystical Sanskrit work written on palm leaves dealing with time and the incidents of the future
2 Lunar days; longitudinal angles between Moon and the Sun
3 An esoteric language of the yogis

sacred land of the Saptarishis[1]. This language spoken in Shambala is different from Sanskrit. It is not possible to describe the sweetness or smoothness of that language. Only Srīpāda, Srī Bāpanārya and Srī Appalaraja Sarma could speak this language in Pīthikapuram.

"Srīpāda said to Srī Bāpanārya, who was known as Satya Rushīswara[2], 'Grandfather, Srī Krishna was speaking neither the truth nor untruth. He only preached the duties that need to be fulfilled.' Srī Bāpanārya said, 'My lad, we should always speak the truth. Untruth should not be spoken even casually.' Srīpāda smiled. That day in the afternoon Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti came to the house of Srī Bāpanārya. Srī Sreshti had an intense desire that Srī Bāpanārya should take meals in their house during the Mahālaya[3] Pakshas[4], and that he should compulsorily accept dakshina after the meals. His thought was that by doing so his ancestors would be greatly pleased. Srī Sreshti had a doubt in his mind whether Srī Bāpanārya would honour his request. Even then, he thought of Srīpāda and expressed his opinion in front of Srī Bāpanārya. Srī Bāpanārya said that he would definitely accept meals in the house of Srī Sreshti and that he would also receive dakshina. These words came from the mouth of Srī Bāpanārya effortlessly. The happiness of Srī Sreshti knew no bounds.

"Srīpāda is highly skilful. During the Mahālaya Pakshas, both Srī Sreshti and Srī Bāpanārya forgot about this promise. In the afternoon of Mahālaya Amāvāsya, Srī Sreshti came to the house of Srī Bāpanārya. Srīpāda smilingly said, 'A promise should not be made in the first place. If a promise is made, then it should be kept. If the promise that was made is forgotten, at least the one who received the promise must remind about it. I demand an explanation from both of you.' Then both of them realized their mistake. This incident shows that *Srīpāda is as much capable of making people aware as He is equally capable of making them forget*. Both of them were sorry for their mistake. He consoled them by saying, 'My role is involved in bringing forgetfulness to both of you. In every human being there is 'I AM' and 'I am' in the form of consciousness. A living being de-

1 The seven sages or seers
2 Rishi of truth, the upholder of truth
3 The last day of the fortnight of descending moon phases
4 Rituals; offerings are made to the manes of departed ancestors from full moon to new moon in the month of Bhādrapada.

rives not only the body but also the 'I am' consciousness from the parents. For this 'I am' consciousness, there is an ordained duty (karma) which is part of the universal plan. This is the bond of karma that comes in succession from the father to the son and from the son to his son and so on. Only when the order of asceticism is taken up after leaving the order of a householder, a release from this bond of karma can take place. The promise that you both made need not be fulfilled with this name and form. This promise has been transferred to the consciousness called 'I AM', the greater ego. Therefore, at some place and at some other time, a person from the lineage of Srī Bāpanārya can eat and receive dakshina from the house of any person belonging to the lineage of Srī Sreshti during the Mahālaya Paksha. You should not ask Me when, how and in what manner it will happen. The form of karma is very difficult to comprehend, and it is very subtle. For certain actions, the physical time and the related yogic time may vary. According to physical time, this promise has to be kept during these Mahālaya Pakshas only. However, since the associated yoga time did not yet arrive, this action is pushed into the distant future.' Srīpāda spoke to both of them beneficially."

Then I asked Srī Bhatt to explain to me in detail about the physical time and the yoga time about which Srīpāda told them. Then Srī Bhatt said, "Along with physical time[1] and physical place[2], there are also mental time[3] and mental space[4]. Together with them there are yoga time and yoga space. Suppose a person is aged sixty years, but if he is constantly in the pursuit of education like a twenty-year old, then his physical time indicates sixty years. That relates to his body. However, his mental age is regarded as twenty years.

"Similarly, if a youth aged twenty years is shouldering the load of responsibilities of a sixty-year-old man, then his physical age indicates twenty years. This relates to his body. But his mental age is considered as sixty years. In this way, there is no rule that the physical time and the mental time should be the same. They may be different.

1 Here: bhūthika kāla
2 Here: bhūthika desa
3 Here: mānasika kāla
4 Here: mānasika desa

"Whoever constantly feels eager mentally to live in Kashi[1] *or Pīthikapuram will derive the fruits of residing in Kashi or Pīthikapuram. Even if the body is at a particular place but the mind does not dwell there, then the fruits of residing in that place cannot be obtained.*

"If a person has a strong mental desire and constantly thinks 'I am going on a pilgrimage to Kashi; I will reside in Kashi', then he will get the benefit of residing in Kashi. The reason for this is that he mentally resides in Kashi only. Therefore, regardless of which country he physically lives in, his mental country would be Kashi only. Similarly, a person who kills a cow while living in Kashi will not get the advantage of physically residing in Kashi. Cranes standing in the waters of the Ganges River while waiting to catch fish will not get the merit of taking a bath in the Ganges River.

"Likewise, even though one lives in Pīthikapuram and visits Srīpāda physically, he cannot be reckoned as a resident of Pīthikapuram or as the devotee of Srīpāda, unless his mental time and mental place are appropriately tuned. Matters relating to yoga time and yoga space can only be comprehended by persons of great spiritual strength. How the divine grace of Srīpāda results in someone being granted the yoga time and yoga space is a divine secret. Man has the authority to only execute the actions.

"Comforts from good actions and misery from bad actions invariably follow as results. Even though bonds of karma from the past lives follow us and pester us, yoga time comes about from the compassion of Sadguru. When that yoga time comes, whatever karma that need to be redeemed in that place will be redeemed in that yoga space. This is a strange matter. In Pīthikapuram, there was a servant called Sivayya with Srī Narasimha Varma. Srīpāda suddenly saw him one day with intent looks. Immediately, there was a lot of change in his mental makeup. He abandoned food and sleep. He started speaking incoherently, 'I am the cause for Creation, administration and destruction. I am the ancient one and the origin. All this Creation is originating in me, developing by me and again merging in me.' Srī Narasimha Varma took lot of pity on Sivayya. He prayed to Srīpāda to save Sivayya. Then Srīpāda took Sivayya to the burial ground. Srī Narasimha Varma also followed. Dried sticks of

1 Now Varanasi or Benares; holy Indian city

an audumbara tree were arranged in the burial ground and Sivayya was made to burn them. Then Sivayya was freed from the curious mental disposition.

"All this appeared strange to Srī Narasimha Varma. Then Srīpāda said, 'Grandpa, there is nothing to wonder. A pandit in Vāyasapura agrahāram[1] was always criticizing Me, "What a great offence! Where is Paramātma[2], the personification of the Vedas? Where is this young urchin Srīpāda? It is said that this boy is the cause for Creation, sustenance and destruction and that He is the origin of the yore. This is all a fraud, a blatant lie." He had this sort of constant thought. That pandit died recently. He became a ghoul[3]. In one of his lives, Sivayya was slightly indebted to that pandit. I created yoga time and decided the burial ground as the yoga space. I arranged a funeral with audumbara sticks as yoga karma and released the pandit from the life of a ghoul. I rescued our Sivayya from that ghoul.'

"My dear Shankar Bhatt, this great effulgence, the light of dharma, who incarnated in Pīthikapuram, is today sanctifying Kurungadda. *Planets give results following the will of Srīpāda. Any kind of astrological results are not bound to occur at a specified physical time and physical place. That will be decided according to the yoga time and yoga space.*

Srīpāda can show grace and avert accumulated fate and even death

"If Srīpāda wills, He can make incidents happen now that are to happen in the future after a thousand years, according to astrological science. An event that has to occur at a great distance will take place here if He wills. That means He can determine the yoga space. Events take place at a particular place and at a particular time. Srīpāda can alter those places and times at His pleasure. Once when a coconut was to be broken before God in the house of Sreshti, Srīpāda personally broke it. The coconut was broken into pieces. It was full of blood. Then *Srīpāda said to Srī Sreshti, 'Grandfather, you are to die today. Your head is to be broken into pieces*

1 Today: Kakinada
2 Super-self / super soul
3 A corpse swallowing monster

and blood is to flow. I transferred that space and time to the coconut and saved you.' Srī Sreshti was astonished at the words of Srīpāda."

In the meantime, dusk had set in. The three of us took leave of Srīpāda and leaving Kurungadda we reached the opposite bank of Krishna River.

***Victory unto** Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!*

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 23

Explanation of the Esoteric Significance of Shiva Worship

The greatness of a Shiva yogi's devotion. The teachings of Srīpāda to him

When I was about to move from the opposite bank of the Krishna River to Kurungadda, I came across a noble Vaishya named Dharma Gupta. He was also coming to Kurungadda for the dārshan of Srīpāda. During the conversation, I learnt that he was related to Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti of Pīthikapuram. There was no end to my astonishment. All the devotees of Srīpāda Srīvallabha I met thus far narrated His divine history, sportive plays, miracles, and amazing incidents. There is a speciality in the wonderful incidents they narrated. Each of them told only a few incidents that happened in a particular year of Srīpāda's life. Those incidents were not related to each other and they appear to be a wonder of wonders. They were very strange matters unheard of, by me, till then. Till now, I was taught by His devotees about His divine plays in an orderly way covering a period of ten years in the life of Srīpāda. I thought that Dharma Gupta may narrate some events that took place in the eleventh year of Srīpāda. Srīpāda does His sportive pastimes every moment.

In the meanwhile, Dharma Gupta began to narrate, "Sir, Shankar Bhatt, I am a devotee of Shiva. When Srīpāda was eleven years old, a Shiva yogi came to Pīthikapuram. He was a worthy man. He used to collect alms in his hands. He did not have any bag, plate or any vessel with him. He appeared like a lunatic to the onlookers. He first came to the temple of Srī Kukkuteswara. On seeing his mad appearance and dust coated figure, the temple priests did not allow him to enter into the temple. He was an avadhūta without body-consciousness. He was repeatedly chanting the Shiva panchākshari mantra[1]. I was going to the house of Srī Pynda Venkatappayya

1 A Shiva mantram described as a five-pointed star; its five syllables correspond to the five original elements

Sreshti riding a horse. Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti was related to me as a brother-in-law. I was in the habit of visiting the Srī Kukkuteswara temple on my way. As I was a prominent Vaishya, the priests in the temple performed a grand pūja in my name on that day. My habit was to give them liberal sambhāvanas[1]. — I gave five varahās to the priests as sambhāvana. They distributed it among themselves. They submitted their financial difficulties, troubles and problems to me. They affirmed that the support of noble Vaishyas like me was very essential for the protection of Sanātana Dharma[2]. Suddenly, the Shiva yogi came in rushing into the temple like a blowing wind. Along with him, two cobras also entered the temple. On seeing this, the priests started sweating profusely with fear.

"The Shiva yogi said, 'You priests! Don't be afraid. These are ornaments for Kukkuteswara whom we adore. These cobras are eager to embrace Kukkuteswara just as children desire to embrace their father. They are like our brothers. It is a great sin to fear, to run away or to kill our brothers on seeing them. They are attracted here by the special pūja performed by the priests. Let us worship Kukkuteswara who wears serpents as ornaments with more care and diligence! Sing namaka and chamaka[3] with good voice and with good melody.'

"The priests were at a loss for what to do. The priests had some sycophants among them. They used to say many words of flattery to please rich persons among devotees provided they gave generous donations to the priests. One of the priests in Pīthikapuram, named Surya Chandra Sastry, was not only a good scholar but also a sincere and strict observer of religious ceremonies. He had great devotion towards Srīpāda. He remembered Srīpāda and began to recite namaka and chamaka with a good voice and with good melody. The visiting cobras also waved their hoods in tune with the melodious rhythm and displayed their happiness.

"Surya Chandra Sastry brought the Shiva yogi to the house of Srī Bāpanārya. A sumptuous meal was given to the satisfaction of the Shiva yogi. Afterwards, the Shiva yogi had the dārshan of Srīpāda. Srīpāda granted him a vision as Shiva-Shakti Swarūpa[4]. The Shiva yogi was in a

1 Alms distributed among Brahmins
2 The eternal Law
3 Mantras used specially in the worship of Shiva
4 A form of Shiva and Parvati or Shakti

state of samādhi for three days. After three days, Srīpāda fed the Shiva yogi food with His divine hands.

"Then He explained very succinctly, 'My dear, perform the religious rituals mentioned in Sanātana Dharma and be liberated. Content of the Purānas is neither fiction nor lies. The general meaning of the Purānas is different from their secret hidden meaning. Only for those spiritual aspirants who observe rigorous spiritual discipline, the inner meanings and profound esoteric secrets of the Purānas will flash in their mental horizon. Among the Sun and the Moon, who cause seasons, the Sun represents the supreme self and the Moon represents the mind. Only when the effulgence of the Sun, representing the super self, and the Moon, representing the mind, combine, the activity of the Creation occurs. Amāvāsya[1] stands for illusion. This Māya at first creates potencies called Vasuvus[2] by adding degrees of light in the Moon and again merging them in itself (Māya). Just as Māya is transmitting the effulgence of Paramātma[3] into the form of the mental Moon, the rays of the Sun are transmitted into the Moon. Even though Māya and Amāvāsya are inert forms, the world that originated on account of them has a combination of intellectual and inert traits, due to its nearness to the intellectual influence.

"Just as the spring season is the basis for sprouting in nature's cycle, a woman's menstrual cycle is the basis for the birth of children. The desire of brahmajnāna[4] will only exist in the progeny that originated from a female. The menstrual cycle in the females is said to be opposing Brahma, the Creator. So, it is said by the pandits that it was generated by killing Brahma[5]. As the secrets of the Vedas are shrouded in chandassu[6], they are called chāndasa. Since the cycle is not straight and has a crooked quality to it, a woman in her menstrual cycle is kept at a distance for three days. Heaven is a lustrous sphere having a natural brilliance. The Earth of the mortals is a place of deaths and births. All the netherworlds are illuminated by the sun-light. Therefore, they are called Prusnulu. All the seven

1 The last day of the fortnight of descending moon phases; new moon
2 Devas of materialization; the eight Vasus/Vasuvus bring out creation on all seven planes.
3 Super-self / super soul
4 Knowledge of Paramātma, the highest self
5 Here: Brahma-hatya
6 Prosody or metrical science

netherworlds[1] have divine potentates (rulers) like Jātaveda[2] and others. The Earth, where we live, is before the seven netherworlds. Fire is its presiding deity. All these eight divine potentates (rulers) are called Ashta Vasuvus[3]. They are called vasuvus because they get light from the Sun. The airy spaces between these eight spheres are called the seven seas. Sage Yāchya remarked that air is also symbolized as sea. Ordinary people consider seven seas as forms of water, but it is not correct.

The greatness of Shiva. The forms of Shiva in the eleven Shiva kshetras in Andhra Pradesh

"Shiva is the personification of the eleven Rudras[4]. There are eleven Shiva kshetras in Andhra Pradesh[5]. Visiting them will confer great benefit. They are

1. Nagareswara in Brihat Sila Nagaram[6]
2. Mallikarjuna in SrīShaila
3. Bhīmeswara in Drāksharāma
4. Rama Lingeswara in Kshīrārama
5. Amaralingeswara in Amaravati
6. Kotiphalīswara in Kotiphali kshetra
7. Kukkuteswara in Pīthikapuram
8. Mahanandīswara in Mahānandi
9. Kāleswar in Kāleswaram
10 Kālahastiswar in Srī Kālahasthi
11. Tripuranthakeswar in Tripuranthakam.

"In reality there is no image for Shiva. The Shiva linga is nothing but the form of light[7] glowing in all souls. The crystal linga[8] is the purity en-

1 Pātālās
2 An epithet for Agni, the God of Fire
3 The eight Vasus/Vasuvus
4 The Lords of Cosmic Will and Vibration
5 The places are partly in today's Indian state of Telangana
6 Penugonda
7 Here: jyoti
8 Here: Spatika linga

shrined in the form of a pure mind achieved after siddhi (perfection). Rudra, who helps us to bestow knowledge to the brain encased in our head, is called Kapāli. The nerves that spread from the brain downwards up to the neck are called Rudra jadas[1]. Shiva in the form of a hatha yogi is called Lakulīsa[2]. Shiva goes begging alms and through it, he takes away the sins of the souls. Shiva dances in ecstasy in tune with the great vibrations of the musical, rhythmic creation, sustenance and liquidation processes. Therefore, Shiva is called Nataraja. Shiva can also grant salvation, which brings the greatest bliss. Chit means mind, ambara means sky or cloth. Chidambara is the one who is in the form of sky. The sky which you behold in this vast universe is the form of Rudra. The twelve jyotir lingas[3] represent the twelve signs of the zodiac. So, Shiva is time personified. Eight directions are the eight embodiments[4] of the form of Chidākasa[5]. The five elements are His five faces. The five sensory organs, the five functional organs and the mind put together become eleven Rudra potencies. They are called Ekadasa Rudras[6]. The image of Uma Maheswara[7] is a perennial, benevolent and beautiful form. The form of Tripurantaka[8] is the one that destroys the three qualities. The wisdom eye is the third eye. During profound peaceful meditation in the samadhi state, the holiness that constantly flows out is the very holy Mother Ganges that is in the coils of the hair on the head of Lord Shiva.

"The form of the primeval couple Shiva-Parvati is the zodiacal sign Mithuna[9]*. When the star* Ārudra[10] *shines in the sky, Shiva grants His dārshan. One has to cross the Vrushabha*[11] *zodiacal sign before reaching*

1 Braids
2 Meaning, the lord with a staff or mace; he is considered as the 28th and the last avatar of Shiva and the propounder of the yoga system
3 A symbol of Shiva; jyotir means radiance and linga means the image or sign; jyotir linga means the radiant sign of the Almighty.
4 Here: Ashta Mūrthi
5 The mind present in space
6 Eleven Rudras
7 The male-female God
8 A form of Shiva as destroyer of the three evil cities Tripura
9 Gemini
10 The nakshatra constellation Ārdrā in Gemini
11 Taurus

Mithuna sign. That Vrishabha is Nandīswara[1]*. That is the personification of dharma. The light that shines between the eyebrows is the crescent moon*[2] *that adorns the forehead. On account of the yogic state, lust is conquered. The difference between the male and female genders is destroyed and a unified position is reached. That position is the form of Ardhanārīswara*[3].

"During the time of Lingodbhava[4], a camphor flame sparkles as a divine light in the thousand-petalled Sahasrāra chakra[5]. Linga means the subtle body hidden in the gross body. The Vedas affirm that it shines like a light.

"The secrets of Shiva's worship can only be known by a regular, disciplined practice and the grace of a guru. *Just as there is the physical Pīthikapuram, there is another golden Pīthikapuram that is formed out of heavenly illumination. That is constructed by My consciousness. Those devotees and wise men who constantly remember Me can know about it from experience. Irrespective of the great distances where they reside, they will become residents of the golden Pīthikapuram. I am always easily accessible to them.*

"The priests you saw in the Kukkuteswara temple in physical Pīthikapuram are born from the origin of pramada ganās[6]. There are many hordes of devils, ghosts and spirits. *For one who practices yoga or worships Srīpāda Srīvallabha, those devils and ghosts will create disturbances. Those who get over those obstacles are indeed fortunate. I told many a time that a Maha Samsthan would be established in the house of My maternal grandfather. My will is very efficacious. Like rows of ants, millions of devotees and groups of yogis will visit My Samsthan. I only will decide who, when, how many and in what mode they will come. It is utterly false to think that simply because they are residents of Pīthikapuram, they can come to the Srīpāda Srīvallabha Samsthan and have dārshan. My grace showers ambrosia on worthy ones. It will be like a mirage to unworthy ones.'"*

1 Nandi, the bull; mount of Shiva, his guardian and servant; Nandīswara meaning Nandi and Ishvara together as a unit
2 Shiva carries the crescent moon at this forehead.
3 The half male and half female form of God
4 Emergence of linga, subtle body
5 A centre in the topmost portion of the head, and is considered to be the seat of Maha shakti
6 Servitors of Lord Shiva

Chapter 24

Explanation of the Ardhanārīswara-Tattwa

Afterwards, I asked Srī Dharma Gupta to explain the inner meaning of the various ornaments and weapons of Shiva. Dharma Gupta narrated, "Shankar Bhatt, a cord[1] and a hook[2] are the main weapons of Ganapati. A disc[3] is the principal weapon of Vishnu. A trident[4] is the important weapon of Shiva. The trident has three sharp prongs. They are in the form of flames of fire. All the three prongs are joined together at the bottom to become a single handle for the trident. Those three prongs indicate sattwa, rajas and tamas gunas[5]. In fact, their unity is beyond the three attributes. The trident indicates this inner meaning. Besides, breath flows through the ida and pingala nerves and reaches the point between the eyebrows in the head. The point where the three nerves - Ida, Pingala and Sushumna - meet is called the Triveni Sangamam[6]. This is the centre of Brahma jnana[7]. This is the inner meaning of the trident.

"Shiva has an ornament called Nāgābharana[8]. When the kundalini power rises up, one gets the eight siddhis. Shiva is called Nāgābharana to indicate the kundalini, which is in the shape of a serpent. Shiva is also named as Iswara. All the great siddhis are dangerous just like serpents. Since He keeps them under His control and utilizes them for the welfare of the world, Shiva also got the name of Iswara.

"The damaru[9] is tied to the trident of Shiva. The sky has the quality of sound. The vibrations of sound travel in the sky. Vibrations emerge when

1 Here: Pāsam; a cord used for curbing
2 Here: Ankusa: A tool with a sharp hook used to direct elephants
3 Here: Sudarsan Chakra
4 Here: Trishul
5 Qualities
6 Confluence of three rivers
7 Knowledge of Brahma
8 Serpent-like jewel
9 A small drum

we chant or hear the mantra japa[1]. Those vibrations cause sounds — resembling the sounds from the damaru of Lord Shiva — in our ears. Repeated recitation of mantra gives happiness to a yogi. In that ineffable joy, he dances. To indicate this, Parameswara[2] holds a damaru.

"The ājnā chakra located in the middle of the eyebrows is the centre of all knowledge. A wise man can acquire supernatural vision when this chakra unfolds in him. A yogi will be able to understand the past, present and future only through this chakra. This ājnā chakra is the third eye of Parameswara. If this knowledge eye unfolds, it will become possible to overcome Cupid, the deity of sensual desires.

"It is said that Shiva resides in a burial ground. When all his desires are burnt to ashes by the fire of yoga, a yogi will experience a state of nirvana[3], bringing forth profound peace. Knowledge or wisdom is compared with the white colour. That is vibhūti[4]. A person gets into pure wisdom when his thoughts and desires are extinguished. He gains happiness from it. The purification through wisdom takes place in four stages; they are the natural, super natural, spiritual and mental planes. To indicate this, devotees of Shiva wear four lines of holy ash on their forehead.

"There is a supreme medicine called Shilajit[5], which looks like a jelly. Those who eat it will remain eternally young. During ancient times, a sage called Shilada was living by eating stones. He later took birth as Nandīswara[6]. Srī Krishna was born in the Rohini star in Vrushabha[7] rāsi[8]. The star Ārudra is the place of Rudra. Mithuna[9] rāsi signifies the phenomenon of Ardhanārīswara[10]. Vrushabha rāsi appears prior to Mithuna rāsi in the sky. That Vrushabha is Nandīswara. Nandi shows the form of dharma. Shiva burnt Manmadha[11] who belonged to the lower nature and who was a

1 Repetition of the name of God
2 The highest God; name of Shiva
3 Liberation
4 Holy ash
5 Powdery to highly viscous, asphalt-like natural product used as a tonic
6 Nandi, the bull; mount of Shiva, his guardian and servant; Nandīswara meaning Nandi and Ishvara together as a unit
7 The zodiac sign of Taurus
8 The zodiac sign where the moon is present on the date of birth.
9 The zodiac sign of Gemini
10 The half male and half female form of God
11 Also called Kamadeva, the god of love and desire

personification of lust. Then Manmadha became formless and associated with the sacred marital dharma of the higher nature. That was the reason why Krishna took to discipleship under Sage Upamanyu and worshipped Shiva very sincerely. And with the grace of Shiva, Krishna had a son named Pradyumna through Rukmini. This Pradyumna was called Manmadha of the lower nature in his previous birth. Vrushabha rāsi is the house of both Manmadha and Kāma[1]. All righteous desires belong to the higher nature. To make it known that it is in accordance with the dharma to satisfy those righteous desires, a ritual known as Vrushotsarjana is performed.

"The frightful tāntrik siddhis and powers are as dangerous as the tigers. Shiva kept those tāntrik siddhis and powers under His control. The tiger is the vehicle for Shakti. *As a sign that He kept Shakti under control as His consort, Shiva wears the skin of a tiger.*

"The sacred River Ganges, who dwells in Shiva's hair braids, signifies pure Brahma jnāna, the perennial flow of intelligence and the attainment of immortality. The crescent moon on Shiva's head signifies the great blissful, joyous and profound tranquility resulting from the eternal graciousness. Therefore, the nature of the Chandrakalādhara[2] is the source for attainment of immortality and a state of ineffable happiness.

"The inner meaning of the Ardhanārīswara tattwa[3] *is that the life force, which enables people to live, is divided into two — it remains as ovum in the uterus of a female and as sperm in a male — and by the combination of those two, a living creature is produced.* However, in Creation, an earthworm contains both mother and father constituents within a single body. In both men and women, the natures of females and males coexist. It must be noted that on the right side of the body masculine power dwells and on the left, feminine power dwells. It should be recognized that the power in the form of breath that circulates on the right side is pingala nādi, and the power that circulates on the left side is ida nādi. During pranayama, when breath is inhaled from the right side, heat is generated in the body. Therefore, it is called surya nādi. When breath is inhaled from the left side, the body cools down. Therefore, it is called chandranādi.

1 Cupid and lust
2 One who wears the crown of moon
3 The principle of the male-female form of God

"In the body of Kāla Purusha[1], the six months that give heat, extending from Mesha[2] rāsi to Tula[3] rāsi in the zodiac, are regarded as the suryanādi. The other six months, from Aswayuja to Phalguna, are considered to be the chandranādi. We should understand that by the motion of the Sun and the Moon, the full moon and new moon[4] phases are formed.

"Through breathing practices, a yogi can achieve in his body all that exists in the wheel of time. He can get the knowledge of time, which enables him to be aware of the past, present and future. This wheel of time is to be recognized as Ardhanārīswara tattwa, and as an inseparable couple. Night and day, full moon and new moon and all such things appear in succession one after the other. One is the basis for the other. There can be no day without night and vice versa. Ardhanārīswara, as the Mother and the Father, is the cause for the emergence of this infinite Creation. The inner meaning of calling Shiva a destroyer is that he is the basis for the old Creation to exit and the new Creation to come into existence. Changes in Creation come about naturally. The advent of a new Creation, its continuance for some time, and again its annihilation, are inescapable. In order to attain all the astras, sastras[5] and mantras mentioned in the Ardhavana Veda[6], one should have the grace of Īsāna Rudra, who is the Lord of all the faculties of astras and sastras." Thus concluded Srī Dharma Gupta.

I asked Srī Dharma Gupta to explain in detail about the close connection between the star Ārudra and Shiva-Parvati. Then he again started narrating, "Rudra appears as a hunter holding a bow and chasing a running deer. This figure is visible in the Ārudra star in the sky. He looks like a hunter.

The effect of the movement of planets

"The image of Rudra in the form of a hunter can be seen in the constellation that exists at a corner between the zodiac houses of Gemini and

1 The divine Person of Time; the Year God
2 The zodiac sign of Aries
3 The zodiac sign of Libra
4 Pūrnami and Amāvāsya
5 Fiery missiles and weapons used in ancient warfare
6 Vedic scripture with magic formulas; also called Atharva Veda

Cancer. When malefic planets like Saturn, Mars or Rāhu[1] move near this constellation, wars that spread across the entire globe and massive devastations take place. Battles between devas and demons and the Mahabharata war[2] took place during such planetary movements.

"Kāla Samhāra Mūrti, the dreadful Rudra who holds a bow, was described in the Vedas as a form of Manyu[3]. The weapon of that Rudra is not the trident; only the bow is His weapon.

"In the month of Māgha[4], the fourteenth moon phase that comes before the new moon, is called Maha Shivarātri[5]. The fourteenth moon phase that comes before every month's new moon is named Māsa Shivarātri.

Worship of Shiva during Sani Pradosha time results in the removal of malefic influence of Saturn

"When Maha Shivaratri occurs on a Tuesday, it is considered very important. If the thirteenth moon phase occurs on a Saturday, then it is called Sani Trayodasi. To remove different types of afflictions caused by Saturn, who brings forth the consequences of fate, Shiva should be worshipped and gingelly seeds[6] should be donated on Sani Trayodasi. Shiva is the Lord of Saturn. So, if Shiva[7] is worshipped with gingelly oil, then the afflictions from Saturn are removed. If Shiva is worshipped during dusk on Saturdays, all evils from karma will get annulled and peace and comfort will be obtained because Shiva is the Lord of Saturn. Saturn causes us to experience the consequences of karma. Shiva causes destruction. Every person should worship Shiva during Sani Pradosha time[8]. This worship reduces all heinous sins arising from inauspicious actions into ashes and purifies the body, mind, intellect, ego, heart and soul through fresh divine effulgent, auspicious vi-

1 The North Node, regarded as a planet
2 A battle in Kurukshetra described in the Indian epos Mahabharata
3 Vedic god of war
4 The 11th month of the Hindu calendar
5 Festival in reverence to Lord Shiva
6 Sesame seeds
7 Here: Parameswara, the highest God
8 Time of worship of Sani (the embodiment of Saturn) or Lord Shiva on Saturday evening

brations and bestows a happy new life. In order to obtain all these supreme achievements, one should worship Shiva during the Sani Pradosha time.

"By following the above procedure, the fury of Saturn will be abated. During the night hours of each Saturday, all the negative forces that preside over the sins of that living being, which are the forces of misfortune and destruction that remain in an invisible thick, black colour form, take residence in Maha Kāli — the form of shakti of Maha Kāla[1]. The next day, on Sunday, at the time of sunrise, on account of the grace of that Maha Shakti dwelling at the central region of the cosmic Sun, a new life will commence for the spiritual aspirant. Heaps of inauspicious sins are burnt in the fire of yoga of Srī Parameswara.

Shiva in the form of five elements

"The five elements are Shiva's forms. The earthly nature is present in our body in mūlādhāra[2]. As a sign of this, spiritual aspirants worship the Pārdhiva linga[3]. Swādhisthāna[4] relates to the nature of water. Jala linga represents this centre. Manipūraka[5] relates to the nature of fire. Jwāla linga represents this centre. This is also called hiranya-stambha[6]. Anāhata[7] in the heart is the seat for the airy nature. Vāyu linga is the symbol of this element of air. Visuddhi[8] in the throat is the seat of sky and is called chidambara linga. This chidambara linga, which is called akāsha linga, has no shape at all. *The adoration, worship and dārshan of these Shiva lingas of the five elemental forces is highly fruitful.*

"In Chidambara kshetra[9] that which lies hidden behind a curtain is called the chidambara rahasya[10]. Nothing is seen when the curtain is

1 The Great Death; the time of the great dissolution; another name of Shiva
2 The base centre
3 An idol made of sand/mud; representation of Shiva; used for a ritual to alleviate the negative effects of the nine planets
4 Spleen centre
5 Solar plexus centre
6 Pillar of gold
7 Heart centre
8 Throat centre
9 A town in Tamil Nadu with a temple dedicated to Lord Shiva
10 Secret of Chidambara

lifted. The pure sky is the ātma linga of Shiva. The heart is the seat of spirit and, therefore, the soul dwells in the sky. In fact, the sky has no form at all. Yogis who concentrate their mind and meditate with a single-pointed look upon their real self, will have the firmament of their heart opened up. The entire Creation, the whole universe, stars, planets and all others will appear in their heart. Runa means sin. Aruna means sinless. Parameswara resides in the heart of the sky. *Parameswara exists in Arunachala*[1] *in the forms of Arunachaleswara, the Arunachala Mountain, and in the form of a Maha Siddha. His dārshan neutralizes all sins. The same Arunachaleswara has now incarnated in the human form in Pīthikapuram as Srīpāda Srīvallabha. He is now brilliantly shining in divine glory in Kurungadda with the intention to liberate us.*

"Kurungadda equals the Arunachala Mountain. Arunachaleswara in the form of Ardhanārīswara is none other than Srīpāda Srīvallabha. The great Siddha in Arunachala is also the guise of this sage only. Just as the mountain in Arunachala is the image of Shiva, this Kurungadda also is the form of Srīvallabha. Just as the forces of Shiva are in Arunachala Shiva linga, the forces of Shiva are in the form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. Seeing Parameswara in the form of Maha Siddha in Arunachala is very difficult, but this Maha Siddha form in the form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha is easily accessible." Thus concluded Srī Dharma Gupta.

I requested Srī Dharma Gupta, "Sir, I heard that Srīpāda is the combined form of Srī Venkateswara Swamī[2] along with Srī Padmavati Devi[3], but you affirmed that He is the form of Shiva–Shakti. You are saying that it is highly meritorious to worship Shiva during Sani Pradosha time. All this is very confusing to me. Kindly explain."

For that Srī Dharma Gupta replied smilingly, "Sir, the divine nature of Srīpāda Vallabha cannot be comprehended even by the Seven Rishis[4]. Even then, I will try to explain this to you to the extent of my abilities. Lord Srī Venkateswara has been in existence since Krita Yuga[5]. He gave boons to

1 A holy mountain near Thiruvannamalai in Tamil Nadu
2 The Lord of the Seven Hills worshipped in Tirupati
3 A form of Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and fortune
4 Seven Sages who are manifested in the universe as the seven stars of the Great Bear
5 The first of the four ages, the Golden Age

Dasaratha[1]. Since He said that He would be born as Srī Rama, He can also be worshipped as Srī Rama – the son of Kausalya[2]. Srī Venkateswara Swamī was worshipped for some time as Bāla Tripura Sundari[3], a form of Shakti. After sometime, He was worshipped in the form of Shiva for some days. Some people worshipped Him as Subramanya Swamī. After that, on the initiative of His Holiness Srī Ramanuja[4], He is now being worshipped by the Vaishnavites as Lord Maha Vishnu. Buddhists regard Him as the Great Sūnya[5]. He is really Lord Datta! He is highly tactful in conducting the drama of illusion. He demonstrates His sportive plays to those spiritual pursuers who call Him, regardless of how they call Him, by responding to their calls and saving them and thereby proving that He is the God. He is the same one who is now giving His presence to the world as Srīpāda Srīvallabha.

"On the left side of Srīpāda's body Shakti moves around and on the right side Shiva moves around. Therefore, He is the personification of Shiva-Shakti. Mother Padmavati adorns His heart. The heart is the symbol of mercy. It is the place for the anāhata chakra. Shakti extends from there to the higher chakras and also to the lower chakras. Therefore, in another body of divine consciousness, He is Srī Padmavati and Srī Venkateswara. He is the form of Vāni[6] and Hiranya Garbha[7] also. Vāni, i.e., Saraswati, who express Herself as parā, pasyanti, madhyama and vaikhari forms of speech[8], dwells on His tongue. The divine consciousness of Mother Vāni and Hiranya Garbha remains in a non-dualistic state.

"The real Chidambara secret is: He assumes three different forms of consciousness at the same time. There is not even a touch of similarity between His different bodies. At the same time, He assumes the bodies of consciousness of Vāni-Hiranya Garbha, Shiva-Parvati and Padmavati-Srī Venkateswara. Simultaneously, He took a body of consciousness called Srīpāda Srīvallabha that transcended the above forms of consciousness.

1 King of Ayodhya, father of Rama
2 One of three wives of Dasaratha, mother of Rama.
3 Beautiful goddess beyond the three worlds; the Divine Mother
4 Founder of the doctrine of Vishishtadvaita (1017–1137 CE)
5 The Great Void
6 Saraswati
7 Brahma
8 The stages of the Word as spoken word, thought, idea and beyond manifestation

This is His Yoga Māya, his Vaishnava Māya[1]. This is His Chidambara mystery. He can be regarded as One belonging to Dwaita[2], Adwaita[3] and Visisthādwaita[4] sects and also as One who is beyond all those. The reason for this is that there are no limits to His Yoga Māya and Vaishnava Māya. For the tactful One who donned the charming figure of Jagan Mohini[5] and distributed nectar only to deities; for the One who enticed Shiva in His Mohini form and who made Shiva enamoured of Him without the need for Manmadha (Cupid); and for One who gave birth to Dharmasāstha[6], nothing is impossible for Him! For Lord Datta who imparts the knowledge stating, 'I am the Mohini form; I am also Dharmasāstha', nothing is impossible for the Him! Ātma[7] said that it will create itself through Māya. Is it not? He who was in the form of Mohini created Himself as Dharmasāstha. Oh, what a tactful way!" Saying this Srī Dharma Gupta made me wonder.

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

1 Illusion created through yogic powers; powers of illusion of Lord Vishnu
2 Dualism
3 Non-dualism
4 Qualified non-dualism
5 The only female avatar of Vishnu
6 The son of Shiva and Mohini
7 The self, the soul

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 25

The Efficacy of Rudrākshas

The methods to worship Shiva and their results

I requested Srī Dharma Gupta to tell me how to worship Lord Shiva. Srī Dharma Gupta explained, "Dear Shankar Bhatt, the first method of worshipping Lord Shiva is to chant the five-syllabled Shiva mantra[1] as a japa[2]. The second method is to worship Shiva through the procedure of mahanyāsa[3]. The third method is performing Rudra abhisheka[4].

"The five letters in the five-syllabled mantra stand for the five primordial elements. A living being is called an animal because he is entangled in the beastly shackles such as attachment, infatuation, etc. Pasupati[5] is the one who releases the living beings from the beastly bonds.

"The five-syllabled Shiva mantra is described as a star with five angles. Among the five-angled mantras, the first variety grants liberation, and the second variety bestows luxury and affluence. During the five types of services performed during the worship, it is said that the sandalwood powder is used for the earthly nature; coconut water is for the watery nature; a lighted lamp is for the nature of fire; a fragrant incense of sambrani is for the nature of air; and the sound of the bell is for the nature of the sky. In this manner, the five types of traditional services performed during the worship of Shiva represent the five elemental natures.

"For the devotees who practice the five letters of the five-syllabled mantra and their respective natures, the five natures will appear with their five colours. The five colours are:

1 OM Namah Shivaya
2 Silent repetition of the name of God
3 A detailed procedure to purify one's body with mantras before the commencement of the water ritual.
4 A special ablution ritual (water ritual) to Rudra
5 The Lord of animals; a name of Shiva

1. The shine of mercury like that of a white pearl or brilliance like that of silver
2. Red colour like that of coral
3. Golden yellow hue
4. Brilliant blue light spread over the universe like blue sky and
5. Pure white light

"The five coloured light which shines in the middle of the eyebrows is called as sandhyopāsana[1] by the sages. It must be understood that yantra, mantra, pancha tattwa practice, yoga practice and self-surrender are the key components of spiritual pursuit. *Through this, the thought of dehātma, i.e., the soul of the body, will be destroyed; the body of jīva*[2] *will be regarded as the temple; the jīva who shines in it will be transformed to be Shivātma; and liberation will be achieved. For attaining that state of liberation, panchākshari japa*[3]*, mahānyāsa worship of Shiva and rudrābhisheka will greatly help.*

"Vishnu likes sahasranama stotra[4]*. Ganapati is fond of modakas*[5]*. The Sun is pleased by salutation. The Moon is pleased with the offering of water. The Fire god gets pleased with oblations*[6]*. Shiva is very much pleased with abhisheka. When the great deluge happened during one of the prior kalpas*[7]*, Brahma filled a vessel with the seeds of each species, such as living beings, trees and herbs, for the future Creation. The waters from all the seas and rivers as well as ambrosia were poured into that vessel. He introduced His life force into it and charged it with the Gayatri mantra. That vessel is called pūrnakumbha. The ambrosia in that pūrnakumbha was showered continuously onto the earth. Since sages conducted this* ābhisheka *at the Kailasa Mountain*[8]*, it became the place of ambrosia. An ice Shiva linga gets formed naturally in the Amaranath*

1 Ritualistic salutation of the two twilights and the noon
2 The individual self or the soul
3 Repetition of the name of God
4 Worship of the thousand names of Vishnu
5 Indian sweet preparation
6 Here: Havis, i.e. oblations of ghī or butter given into the fire
7 An age
8 Mount Kailash in Tibet

cave[1] *on the full moon of Srāvana*[2]*. On merely seeing this Amaranath Shiva linga, all sins will get diminished.*

Birth of the Sages Vasishta and Agastya

"When the pūrnakumbha was kept upside down, two great sages came out of it. The first one, Sage Vasishta, emerged with white effulgence. The second one, Sage Agastya, was born with blue effulgence. Both were born with the intrinsic properties of Mitra and Varuna deities.

"With the water sanctified in the pūrnakumbha, Ekadasa[3] *Rudrābhisheka*[4] *must be performed eleven times. By doing this, the merit of the eleventh moon phase*[5] *will be granted by Parameswara*[6]*, who is the personification of Ekadasa Rudra.* Since there is a close connection between the eleven Rudras and the eleventh moon phase, which is considered sacred by the Vaishnavitesit must be noted that Shiva and Kesava[7] are inseparable. *When Ekadasa Rudrābhisheka is conducted with Namaka*[8] *mantras, all ill aspects that lead to untimely death are removed.* Moon is the presiding deity of Somalata[9]. He showers strength needed for rejuvenation. This spark of moon glows above the centre point of the eyebrows and before sahasrara centre in the head of a yogi.

Description of different forms of Lord Shiva

"For this very reason, it is said that the crescent moon adorns the crown of Lord Shiva. In Somanath[10] kshetra of Gujarat, the crystal Shiva linga

1 A cave in North Indian Jammu and Kashmir state in Himalayas dedicated to Shiva
2 A month of the Hindu calendar; corresponds to the month of Leo
3 Eleven
4 A special ablution ritual (water ritual) to Rudra
5 Here: Ekadasi tithi
6 The highest God
7 One of the names of Vishnu
8 A hymn dedicated to Rudra
9 Soma plant
10 Somnath, on the western coast of Gujarat; the first among the twelve Jyotirlinga shrines of Shiva; meaning 'Protector of the Moon God'

made from Chandrakant stone[1] with a glowing white crescent moon on Shiva's head is worshipped.

"Unless one attains the state of Rudra, the Rudrābhisheka should not be performed as per the Scriptures. Since the time engulfs everything, the person performing abhisheka should become one with the time and mentally invoke the form of yagna into his body with mahanyāsa[2] and then perform Rudrābhisheka.

"The Mahānyāsa Rudrābhisheka[3], as described by Sage Bodhayāna[4], worships five forms of Shiva. They are Tatpurusha, Aghora, Sadyojāta, Vāmadeva and Īsāna[5]. The form of Tatpurusha is in the colour of the electric power resembling the fire of pralaya[6]. The form of Aghora is in the blue colour of a cloud, i.e., the colour of a dark blue bee. The form of Sadyojāta is in the jasmine white colour of the moon. The form of Vamadeva is in the colour of snow-white. The form of Īsāna is of an effulgent form and, therefore, He is of the sky colour.

"It is said that Rudras are thousands and thousands in number. That means, the deities named Rudraganas[7] are there, three for each group[8]. Thus, for eleven Rudras there are 330 million Rudraganas. The Vedas affirm that they pervade the earth, sky, cosmos, water, air, body, life force and mind.

"The Lord of these 330 million Rudraganas is Ganapati[9]. Therefore, Srīpāda Srīvallabha incarnated on this Earth on Ganesh Chaturdhi[10] to re-

1 A class of mineral called moonstone; popular for making beads or idols of Shiva; moonstone influences the body's magnetic field and has therapeutic importance
2 A detailed procedure to purify one's body with mantras before commencement of the water ritual
3 Water ritual for the idol of Lord Shiva
4 Indian priest and mathematician, lived probably around 800 BCE
5 The five aspects of Shiva: Aghora — the aspect of the south, associated with Rudra, fire; Sadyojāta — the aspect of the west, associated with Brahma, earth; Vāmadeva — the aspect of the north, associated with Vishnu, water; Īsāna — the inner, conceiling aspect, associated with all that is; ether / space.
6 Dissolution of the worlds
7 Forces of Rudra
8 Here: Gana
9 Ganesha
10 A festival in honour of Lord Ganesha, celebrated the 4th ascending moon phase in Virgo

veal, in a yogic way, the Ganapati element in Him. So those who worship and remember Srīpāda, will derive the grace of 330 million Rudraganas.

Description of Rudrākshas

"Devotees of Shiva should compulsorily wear rudrākshas[1]. *Among the rudrākshas, there exists Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shūdra categories. White rudrākshas belong to the Brahmin category. They are rarely available*. Red, honey coloured rudrākshas are of the Kshatriya category. Rudrākshas of tamarind seed colour relate to the Vaishya category and black ones belong to the Shūdra category.

"Generally, rudrākshas with five to sixteen faces are largely available. Rudrākshas drown when placed in milk or water. Light rudrākshas or tender rudrākshas should not be worn. When a rudrāksha is placed below a copper spoon and if a copper plate is kept underneath, if it rotates clockwise like a sāligrama[2] then it should be understood that it is of good quality. Some rudrākshas rotate anti-clockwise. They bring poverty. So householders should not use them. If householders use them, then bad effects like death of wife, dissolution of family and renunciation from family can happen. Ascetics may, however, use them.

"Kālāgni Rudra said that Brahmins should use white rudrākshas, Kshatriyas should use red rudrākshas, Vaishyas should use light yellow rudrākshas and Shūdras should use black rudrākshas. Then they will get favourable results, their sins are destroyed, and all their desires will be fulfilled. The special features of rudrākshas with different number of facets are as follows:

- One-faced rudrāksha is the form of Shiva;
- Two-faced rudrāksha is the form of Ardhanārīswara;
- Three-faced rudrāksha is the form of Agni;
- Four-faced rudrāksha is the form of Brahma;
- Five-faced rudrāksha is the kālāgni form of Rudra;
- Six-faced-rudrāksha is the form of Kārtikeya;
- Seven-faced rudrāksha is the form of Manmadha;

1 The seed of a tree termed as Elaeocarpus ganitrus
2 A species of ammonite worshipped as Vishnu

- Eight-faced rudrāksha is the form of Rudra Bhairava;
- Nine-faced rudrāksha is the form of Sage Kapila. It is difficult to get it. In nine-faced rudrāksha nine forces called vidya shakti, jnāna shakti, kriya shakti, sānta shakti, vāma shakti, jyestha shakti, rūdra shakti, anga shakti and pasyanti are embedded. Therefore, nine-faced rudrāksha is the form of the deva of dharma.
- Ten-faced rudrāksha is the form of Vishnu;
- Eleven-faced rudrāksha is verily the form of Rudra;
- Twelve-faced rudrāksha is the form of the twelve Ādityas[1].

"In this way there is a close connection between rudrākshas and different forms of Deities.

"Within His form of consciousness, Srīpāda Srīvallabha has the nature of Ganesha, who is the Lord of the forces of attachment and detachment. Therefore, He is the divine personification of the 330 million deities. Not only that. Without His will, not even one atom or molecule in this Creation can move or stir. He is responsible for all movements. He is the cause of all causes. He appears as Vishnu to those who consider Him as Shiva. He is felt as Shiva by those who regard Him as Vishnu. He appears in His real form when we eliminate the argumentative nature in our mind and surrender to Him."

In this way Dharma Gupta explained vividly about the methods of worshipping Shiva and many other matters relating to rudrākshas. Then he expressed his desire to go along with me to Kurungadda and have the dārshan of Srīpāda to make his birth purposeful.

Both of us came to Kurungadda and had the dārshan of Srīpāda Srīvallabha Guru Sārvabhūma[2]. Srīpāda opened His eyes from yogic sleep and remarked, "Oh, what sort of discussions! There is One called Srīpāda! He is Shiva! Am I Srīpāda? Or has Srīpāda come in My shape? Actually who am I? Sir! Dharma Gupta, please explain a little."

Then Dharma Gupta said to Srīpāda, "Swamī, when I started from Pīthikapuram for the dārshan of Srī Maha Guru, my brother-in-law Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti cautioned me not to fall into ignorance by arguing and counter-arguing with Srīpāda but only to seek His refuge and gain His

1 Twelve sons of Āditi, the highest Light; solar gods
2 The Emperor

grace. So I will observe silence for any questions posed by you. When even the Vedas could not explain your nature and remained dumb, what am I, a layman, before you? What is my knowledge?"

Srīpāda became gracious. He granted for me and for Dharma Gupta salutation to His Feet. When we touched His Feet, we lost consciousness and remained in a state of meditation for a very long time. Dusk was approaching. Srīpāda instructed us to leave Kurungadda and to reach the opposite bank of Krishna River. We followed His instructions. Srī Dharma Gupta and I spent that night talking about the divine plays of Srīpāda. It is not possible to say that His plays will be in a particular fashion. We slipped into sleep. We heard an invisible melodious voice from somewhere. Some yogis were chanting the name of Srīpāda Srīvallabha Digambara[1].

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

1 Wearing no clothes

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 26

The Story of Srī Kanyaka Parameswari's Birth

In the morning, we reached Kurungadda to have dārshan of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. Srī Dharma Gupta had an intense desire to know from Srīpāda the particulars pertaining to the advent of Kali Yuga[1]. On that day, Srīpāda had a very placid countenance that was like a beautiful blossom. With His ambrosial looks showering nectar of compassion, He granted us the great fortune of touching His divine lotus feet.

Srī Dharma Gupta prayed to Srīpāda to tell us about the genesis of Kali Yuga.

For that, Srī Charan said, "My children, time is the cosmic form of the Supreme Self. The Sun is also called the soul of time. The time taken by the Sun to start from the star Dhanishta[2] and go round the star Sravana[3] once and get back to Dhanishta is termed as Brahma kalpa[4]. One-half of Brahma kalpa is srushti kalpa and the remaining portion is reckoned as pralaya kalpa. Ordinary people experience similar phenomenon as the day and night.

"One-half of the time relating to the manes is sukla paksha[5] and the other half is krishna paksha[6]. Uttarāyana[7] is for six months of the year, and dakshināyana[8] is for six months of the year. A yogi visualizes the wheel of time in his own body. This esoteric knowledge is called Tāraka Raja Yoga Vidya[9]. The knowledge of time cannot be known by those who do not know Tāraka Raja Yoga.

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1 Dark age
2 23rd Nakshatra constellation of the Hindu zodiac
3 22nd Nakshatra constellation of the Hindu zodiac
4 An aeon of Brahma (cycle of time)
5 The first half of the lunar month; waxing moon phases
6 The second half of the lunar month; waning moon phases
7 The ascending path of the Sun, from winter solstice to summer solstice
8 The descending path of the Sun, from summer solstice to winter solstice
9 A path of yoga where the practitioner is asked to focus, observe and discriminate, to discern reality through knowledge and attain perfection

"In Tāraka Raja Yoga, the body is construed as brahmānda[1]. All the worlds are in it. The point of thought in our head is termed as the world of Brahma. The world of Vishnu is in the navel. The world of Rudra is in our heart. Manes lie in our sperm as deities of reproduction. These reproductive deities[2] transmit the consequences of the actions of the past generations of mankind to the succeeding generations and make them experience those results. Therefore, time is very essential to bestow, in an orderly way, results from the actions from the previous births.

Symptoms of the end of Kali Yuga

"Manes of the departed ones are not the dead elders. They are reproductive deities who receive the fruits of obsequious ceremonies performed in the name of ancestors and grant them noble status. They do not have any birth.

"A yogi visualizes the six yogic centres in his body as seasons of the year outside. There are twelve full moons and twelve new moons in a year. These twenty-four holy days are to be understood as the twenty-four steps of the Gayatri meter. Some people worship Narayana, who is the personification of time as the Purusha[3] of the year. This knowledge is called Dwādasāksharī Vidya[4]. With one letter for each month, for twelve months it becomes a mantra of twelve letters.

"Know that the following developments indicate an end of the epoch of Kali. Inundation of rivers and rivulets causing immense loss; Earth shaking always with tremors as though leading to final destruction; the Sun and the Moon deviating from their paths; thick gloom enveloping the Sun who becomes unseen during daytime; horrible comets appearing in the sky portend the end of Kali Yuga.

"During the last phase of Dwāpara Yuga[5], Kali Purusha, who is the chief of Kali Yuga, undertook fierce penance in an island in the western sea. All these matters were narrated by Sage Vedavyasa in his Bhavishya Purāna[6].

1 Universe
2 Intelligences of reproduction governing the reproductive processes
3 A person, the eternal self, the absolute pure consciousness
4 Meaning twelve-syllabled knowledge
5 The third of the four ages
6 The Purana of the future

Advent of Mlechha race

"On seeing the great prevalence of the Vedic mantras, sacrifices and penances, Kali Purusha became very miserable. He prayed to God, 'Dharma is shining everywhere like a blazing fire. How can I spread the influence of Kali under these circumstances? I have to spread my yuga dharma according to the promise I made to you. It is becoming impossible for me.' Then the Lord of the universe showed to Kali an island in the western sea. The Lord showed Kali, on that island, Adama, a male who is the originator for the Mlechha race, and Havyavati, a female. He created a beautiful garden for their enjoyment. In reality, they were brother and sister. Kali entered that garden as a serpent. He ignited immoral lust among them and encouraged them to beget illicit and unethical children. As soon as they were downfallen, the divine forces in them disappeared. From this couple, the Mlechha race[1], which is the origin for kali dharma, started.

"In the last phase of the Dwāpara Yuga, i.e., 2,800 years prior to the end of the Dwāpara Yuga, the progeny of that race grew in numbers in the land of Mlechha. This was mentioned in Pratisarga Parva[2] of Bhavishya Purāna.

"Adama and Havyavati, who were created in Nīlachala, tasted the fruit of sin and increased in numbers their offspring who abused *ārya* dharma, who ate all sorts of things and who were unrighteous. I will have to incarnate as Kalki and destroy millions and millions of unethical people and establish Satya Yuga again. This is My programme in the distant future."

Then Dharma Gupta said, "Swamī, I have a desire for many days to learn the story of Srī Vasavī Parameswari from you. Please tell me."

Srī Charana charismatically smiled and said:

Kanayaka Purāna

"Srī Kanyaka Purāna is included in the Sanat Sujata Samhitha of Skanda Purana. Brihat Sila Nagaram is also known as Jyestha Sailam. There were eighteen towns namely:

1 The non-Vedic, barbarian race
2 The part of the Bhavishya Purāna called Pratisarga, about the genealogy of the kings and sages

1.	Brihat Sila Nagaram	10.	Kalingapuram
2.	Niravadyapuram	11.	Panchalapuram
3.	Vīranarayanam	12.	Palakolanu
4.	Vishalapuram	13.	Pedatrigunapuram
5.	Asantamu	14.	Bhimapuram
6.	Narasapuram	15.	Ghantasalam
7.	Dhanadapuram	16.	Pīthikapuram
8.	Dharmapuram	17.	Chinna Jaganadham
9.	Peddajagannadham	18.	Chinna Trigunapuram

"Kusuma Sresthi was ruling these towns with Brihat Sila Nagaram as the capital. Eighteen is the victory number. In these eighteen towns, there were Vaishya Nagara Swamīs belonging to 714 gotras. Only 102 of them were naturally formed gotras. There were strict rules imposed on these 102 gotras. The people of other gotras said that they would also follow those strict rules and thus were included in the Vaishya Nagara Swamīs which resulted in the number of gotras to be increased to 714. People who followed strict austerities and belonging to the 102 gotras lived in Brihat Sila Nagaram; they worshipped Ārya *Maha Devi, i.e., Parvati Devi. They were called and revered as* Ārya *Vaishyas for the reason that they migrated from* Ārya *Varatham, worshipped* Ārya *Maha Devi and followed strict austerities different from other Vaishyas. The rest of the people belonging to other gotras requested that they also be included in the* Ārya *Vaishyas. Bhaskaracharya was regarded as the guru for Srī Kusuma Sresthi. My grandfather Bapannāvadhanulu is indeed Bhaskarcharyalu in his previous birth. On listening to the request made by the people of the other gotras, Bhaskaracharyalu said, 'My dear people, it is not possible to assess the value and come to a decision without testing the eligibility.*

To take the decision and confirm the eligibility, we all shall have a test of fire[1]*. People who pass this test of fire will certainly be given the title* Ārya *Vaishya. Else, this title will not be given. Is it acceptable by all?' Everyone agreed to this.*

"In those days, Vaishyas used to devotedly worship Parameswari. Owing to their ardent devotion, some of the people offered their children to Parameswari.

"Girls who were offered in this way were called as Gaura Balikas. The boys were called as Bala Nagaras. There was a strict rule that Gaura Balikas should only be married to the Bala Nagaras. Bhaskaracharya used to give special dīksha[2] to the Gaura Balikas and Bala Nagaras, which was named as chaitanya kriya yogam[3]. Even from the childhood, they used to be transformed into yoginis and yogis. Bhaskaracharya believed that children born to such people would be in a higher state and that their families would live happily with wealth and luck and would live like Gauri and Shankar[4]. These eighteen towns were the especially consecrated ones. Nagareswara Mahadeva was the chief of these celestial towns and Kusuma Shreshti was the king ruling these towns. Bhaskaracharya's desire was to bring about a new type of Creation into the nature through this approach.

"Since Kusuma Shreshti's couple had no children, Bhaskaracharya conducted the Putra Kamesti ritual. Ārya Mahadevi manifested in the fire pit and granted two fruits to them. Consequently, during the first half-month of Vaisakha[5] on a Dasami[6] and Friday when the Punarvasu[7] star was prevailing, Vasavī Kanyaka was born. A twin brother, a male child, was also born along with Vasavī Kanyaka. They named this male child Virūpaksha.

"Vasavī Kanyaka is in reality My divine sister. Virūpaksha was born as her twin brother with the amsa[8] of Nandīswara[9]. In the past, Shilada Maharshi,

1 Agni Parīksah
2 A spiritual discipline to change one's behaviour and habits
3 An ancient yoga technique
4 Parvati and Shiva
5 Nakshatra constellation in the month of Libra-Scorpio
6 10th waxing or waning moon phase
7 Nakshatra constellation in the month of Gemini-Cancer
8 Part, a part of God that has descended and taken to form; an avatar is a complete descent
9 Nandi, the bull; mount of Shiva, his guardian and servant; Nandīswara meaning Nandi and Ishvara together as a unit

who was eating stones as food, went to the Himalayas. He had the dārshan of Himavathi Maha Devi[1] and prayed, 'Oh Mother! You are the daughter of the mountain. In a way, since I eat stones, I am also the son of a mountain. Please grant me the blessing of being born as Your brother.' Srī Himavathi Devi said, 'Maharshi, I will marry Parameswara in this birth. You be our vehicle as Nandīswara. In Kali Yuga, when I take birth as Kanyaka Parameswari, you will also be born as My twin brother. I am gifting you the stone on which I did the penance. Take this stone to the town of Jyesta Sailam. This stone should be placed in a pit and a fort should be built on it. In Kali Yuga, a good Vaishya named Kusuma Shreshti will build this fort. Later on, I, along with the couples belonging to 102 gotras, will go into the fire place[2] and will reach Kailasam[3] again. When the end of Kali Yuga comes, My brother Srīpāda Srīvallabha will incarnate as Kalki and will slay millions of people of bad character and will establish dharma. *Sripada Srivallabha will leave his yati*[4] *form and manifest as Padmavati Venkateswara. Srī Padmavati will be born in the place called Simhala. Srī Venkateswara will be born in the Shamballa village. Towards the end of Kali Yuga, their marriage will take place. Lord Srī Kalki will come to Brihat Sila Nagaram. "I" in the form of Vasavī Kanyaka and My Lord in the form of Nagareswar will invite Srīpāda Srīvallabha, who would be in the Kalki form, with great honours. As a token of love, I will tie raksha bandhan*[5] *to My brother. With fondness and love towards Me, My brother will give divine ornaments, diamonds and pearls and divine royal clothes and will perform very splendidly My marriage with Nagareswar.* Our divine marriage will be witnessed by the couples of the 102 gotras who in the past entered the fire place with Me. Subsequently, We, the newly married couple, will go to Pīthikapuram. That Great Lord, who will be in the Kalki form, will give dārshan in the form of His previous incarnation as Srīpāda Srīvallabha amidst thousands of devotees. My dear Sīlada, when My marriage takes place, both Lord Kalki and

1 The Daughter of the Mountain, Saila Putri; an aspect of Durga
2 Agni Kundam
3 Mount Kailash
4 Monk
5 A friendship thread tied at Raksha Bandhan around the wrist of a brother or a sister; Raksha Bandhanis an Indian festival where the love and duties between brothers and sisters are celebrated, also between similar, biologically unrelated relationships.

you will take part in the wedding festivities as My brothers. You will be thus blessed.'" Thus spoke Srī Himavathi Devi.

"My dears, Gosthani River[1] is one boundary on the western side of this tributary kingdom with its capital as Brihat Sila Nagaram. Antarvedi[2] is the boundary towards south. Godavari River is its boundary on the east and north directions.

"There was a metallic hand and a hand-bell that used for offering mangala harathi[3] in the house of Kusuma Shreshti. Both of them put together weighed more than sixteen and one-half visalas[4]. There was a metallic hand and a hand-bell that used for giving mangala harathi in the house of Bhaskaracharya. Both these, too, weigh more than sixteen and one-half visalas. After My Maha Samsthan is established in the future, this metallic hand and the hand-bell which are at present in Bhaskaracharyas's house will reach Pīthikapuram and will be stored at many feet underneath the audumbara tree near my idol. Subsequent to their arrival there, My Charithamrutam will come to light.

"My dears, tomorrow is the birthday of Srī Vasavī Kanyaka. In addition, it is Friday. As per the calculations in Sāndra Sindhu Veda[5], it is a highly sacred time. You should leave this place (Kurungadda) immediately. Build a small house with straw grass in a place called Panchadeva Parvatham[6]. The things you require will be arranged. Tomorrow, I will hold court[7] there. Women seeking the fortune of mangalyam[8] should certainly take the tuber of turmeric that will be distributed there. The fortune of mangalyam will be granted to those who will receive that tuber of turmeric and place it in their puja altar.

"Tomorrow, I will describe the comprehensive story of Srī Kanyaka Parameswari. All My devotees who will come to Panchadeva Pahād tomor-

1 A river in Andhra Pradesh
2 A village in the East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh
3 Light ceremony with camphor for worshipping God with fire
4 An older measure of weight that was in use in India at one time
5 A mystical Sanskrit work written on palm leaves dealing with time and the incidents of the future
6 A small hamlet on the banks of the river Krishna
7 Here: Darbar
8 In the Indian marriage ceremony a thread or necklace that the groom puts around the bride's neck. After tying three knots, they are officially married.

row will be blessed. To listen to the incidents of the most sacred incarnation of Vasavī Kanyaka from Me is the result of the merit earned in numerous births.

"From now onwards, on every Friday, I will hold court. As per My convenience, it can be at Kurungadda or Panchadeva Pahād; any other place too. Every Thursday, dharma will be taught. It can be at Kurungadda or Panchadeva Pahād. Many changes are going to come in the future. In the coming centuries, India will come under the rule of Mlechhas and white people. The ways of fate are peculiar. It is only through the flow of spiritual power that liberation will be attained to this karma land and Veda land. If Datta is not forgotten, Datta will not forget. Forgetfulness is similar to death. Remembrance will give new birth."

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 27

Visiting Virupāksha in the Panchadeva Pahād Area

Srī Dharma Gupta and I reached the opposite bank of the river Krishna. It was afternoon. It was Thursday afternoon, which was very sacred time when Srīguru Sārvabhūma[1] receives bhiksha[2] from various places at the same time. Srīpāda asked us to construct a house with straw grass, that, too, in a single day. We were not acquainted with the place. Moreover, a site was required to construct the house. House construction implements were required in that place. Straw grass was required to cover the top. Suitable labourers were required for doing all these things.

Importance of Panchadeva Pahād

We were wandering hither and thither like aimless travellers. We entered into a field. The cultivator was constructing a cowshed for the cattle. He was arranging a high pedestal in an elevated place at a suitable location for the landlord to sit. The owner of that place invited us cordially and gave us meals. We were hungry. We were in a doubt whether we can eat meals served by a Shūdra. That owner spoke harshly, "Oh, you stole our cattle and sold them in other places. Now you came again to see if any cattle are still left so that you can stealthily drive them away. For such of you who came with that bad intention, a doubt arose whether food from a Shūdra can be taken!" We understood the matter. The landlord was thinking that we were thieves. We ate the meals with aversion. During the course of conversation, it was learnt that his name was Virupāksha. When we finished meals, we were tied to two trees. I was a poor Brahmin and made a living by begging. I did not have any money, but Srī Dharma Gupta had money. The landlord ordered his servants to snatch all the money from us.

1 The Emperor
2 Donation of food or money

The unimaginable divine sports of Srīpāda

We felt that there was no use even if we told them the truth about us. By the orders of the landlord, we became prisoners not knowing what to do. In the meanwhile, some Mylārs[1] came there. Among the Mylārs, there was a sect known as Ganga Kāvillu[2]. These people carry pīthas of Srī Vasavī Kanyaka Parameswari. They apply tripundras[3]. They hold small victory bells in their hand and sing songs and verses eulogizing Srī Kanyaka Parameswari Devi. These Ganga Kāvillus carry large metal vases with narrow openings on yokes and come at the time of marriages and other auspicious events and on the occasion of the birthday of Mother Srī Vasavī. Besides these, another type of people called Vīra Mushtulu[4] also visit these places. They come with prabhas[5] tied around their waists shouting "Jaya Jaya" and making sounds of victory with the bells in their hands. On these prabhas one can see swords, armors and many more different war weapons.

Vīra Mushtulu also came to that place along with the Mylārs. Some soldiers of the king Vishnu Vardhana became devotees of Mother Srī Vasavī and joined the Bala Nagaras to fight with the soldiers that were loyal to Vishnu Vardhana. The people in the families of those soldiers who were devotees of Mother Srī Vasavī are called Vīra Mushtulu. Since they sacrificed their wealth, honour and lives in that sacred war on that day, the Vaishya kings honour them during auspicious occasions. That cultivator offered meals to Mylārs and Vīra Mushtus and honoured them. Then released us and requested us to participate in the construction of the cowshed. We agreed. When all the work was finished Virupāksha asked me, "Do you know what is mushtilo mushti vīra mushti[6]?" I replied that I did not know. We were given meals in the evening also. He commanded that

1 A group of people in Andhra Pradesh who went through villages performing the worship of deities through song and dance
2 A sect of Mylars who carried a portable woodwork platform on their shoulders bearing the form of the deity Vasavī
3 The triple mark worn across the forehead by Shaivaites
4 A group of soldiers working under the invading king Vishnu Vardhana who worshipped Vasavī and therefore turned against their own king and fought his other soldiers
5 Lighted sticks
6 Alms within alms is bigoted heroic begging of alms

we should guard the cattle wealth and sleep there that night. Afterwards, he left with his band of servants.

That night we both recollected the name of Srīpāda and His sportive pastimes. When we woke up in the morning, we found no trace of cows or oxen in the cowshed. The cultivators nearby asked us at what price we purchased the land. We told them about the things that happened the day before. They did not believe our statements and considered us to be mad people. It could not be resolved as to what was truth and what was false. Then a stranger came there. He questioned us, "Did Srī Vasavī Kanyaka take birth on Vaisakha Suddha Dasami[1]? Or on Saptami[2]?" Srī Dharma Gupta replied that Mother Srī Vasavī was born on Dasami and on that day it was a full Dasami tithi[3] and that it was on a Friday. When he heard that reply he questioned, "Are you two lunatics going to that lunatic in Kurungadda who is sitting without any work?" The conduct of that stranger was objectionable to us.

Srī Dharma Gupta said to me, "Even if the stranger spoke offensively, he taught our duty. We must go to Kurungadda immediately." We travelled to Kurungadda on a boat. There was no money neither with me nor with Srī Dharma Gupta to pay to the boatman. That boatman rebuked us, saying, "For now, I am excusing you and am leaving you. It is your duty to inform even before you get into the boat whether you have money or not." The boatman looked over Srī Dharma Gupta. He took away the ring on the hand of Srī Dharma Gupta. He did not keep it with him but threw it into the river Krishna. We reached Kurungadda. Srīpāda, after taking bath in the river Krishna, was in deep meditation.

After a little while, He opened His eyes. Looking at us, He smiled. He asked us if we had built a house required for holding the court[4] at Panchadeva Pahād. We narrated all the things that took place on the day before.

He said, "My dear, without My will, no one can come to Me. Without My will, nobody will have devotion in Me. Within a second, I can make a rich man, however rich he is, into a pauper. However poor a pauper is, in

1 10th day of first fortnight of Vaisakha month
2 On 7th day
3 Lunar days; longitudinal angles between Moon and the Sun
4 Here: Darbar

a moment I can make him rich. I can make a mad fellow into a healthy person and I can also make a person who is completely healthy into a mad fellow. All powers and siddhis are in My hand.

"The landlord whom you saw yesterday was Virupāksha, the brother of Srī Vasavī Kanyaka. The cow wealth which you saw was the same cow wealth that Srī Kusuma Sreshti had at that time. The Mylārs and Vīra Mushtis that you saw were of those days only. That stranger who asked you in an objectionable language whether you were going to Kurungadda was Myself. The one who took the ring from Dharma Gupta and threw it into the Krishna River was Myself. My court was built by Mylārs, Vīra Mushtis, Vīrabhadra and his associates. It was purely your good fortune that you also took part in that great endeavour. For Me, all the times — past, present and future — are the same. All the places are the same.

"I can recreate the incidents of any place and of any time; I can also create new incidents with some changes. This illusionary human form of Mine as Srīpada Srīvallabha will change into Srī Padmavati Venkateswara by the end of Kali Yuga. People who know that everything is in My hands are blessed."

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Chapter 28

The Story of Srī Vasavī and Srī Nagareswara

Description of the forms of Vishnu — Maha Vishnu, Lakshmi — Maha Lakshmi, Saraswati — Maha Saraswati, Kāli — Maha Kāli

It was Friday. It was the auspicious time of the birthday celebrations of Srī Vasavī Kanyaka Parameswari. Srīpāda walked on the waters of the Krishna River and reached the other shore. We reached the shore on a boat. It was seven ghadiyas[1] in the morning. It was the auspicious time at which Srī Venkateswara Swamī[2] along with his consort Srī Alivelu Manga receives worship and other services.

Srīpāda entered into the cowshed that was constructed the day before and went into deep meditation. We also entered the cowshed at the same time. That was a unique occasion when the court[3] of Srīpāda commenced.

Wonder of wonders! The body of Srī Charan suddenly became very brilliant. That great effulgence spread in all the four directions. His body did not appear as a physical body but as an image of effulgence. He came out of the cowshed. Normally, His shadow used to appear on the ground, but on that day, His shadow did not fall on the ground. Generally, there used to be footprints on the ground when He walked, but on that day, there were no footprints on the ground. He stared very sharply towards the Sun God. His body was filled with divine brilliance and the form of great lustre became bigger and bigger. After some time, His effulgent form merged with the Sun. We saw with our eyes the disappearance of Srīpāda.

We saw a child of divine lustre in the effulgence of the Sun. The child came out of the Sun and came briskly towards the Earth. When the child stepped on the Earth, the Earth vanished from our vision. He had a won-

1 An Indian unit of time equalling to 24 minutes
2 The Lord of the Seven Hills worshipped in Tirupati
3 Here: Darbar

derful smile. Again, He most intensely looked towards the Sun and we were able to see the Earth again. He asked both of us to look towards the Sun again. We saw in the Sun a divine child form with perfect beauty and charm. That divine child was of a feminine form. She came towards the Earth with charming smiles. When the feet of the divine child touched the Earth, the Earth vanished from our sight. We looked at this with awe and wonder. The divine child smiled on seeing us. The Earth became visible to us immediately.

Srīpāda held that female form fondly in His arms. Srīpāda was aged sixteen years and the divine child was aged three years. She resembled Srīpāda very much. She wore silken clothes and precious divine ornaments. Srīpāda and the divine child entered the cowshed again.

Srī Dharma Gupta and I witnessed these wonderful spectacles with wonder, excitement and fear. A doubt cropped up in my mind whether it was all a magical trick.

Srīpāda, who sensed my feelings, affirmed with a profound thundering voice, "Oh, Shankar Bhatt, this is not magic or jugglery. This is My nature. This is My divine disposition. Within a moment I can turn the sky into the Earth. Whatever I will, Brahma creates it in accordance with My will. Then it gets expressed into the Creation in multiple ways. The forces of nature, which are invisible, will be brought to light through the forms and qualities of the Creation. *When it is said that I am of the form of Brahma, it means that I give inspiration to Brahma to create*. All the created living beings and the created things are sustained for some time. This is the function of Vishnu. *I am that Maha Vishnu who urges Vishnu to do so!* Saraswati and Maha Saraswati are different. Saraswati is the form of knowledge relating to Creation. *Maha Saraswati is Anaghā Devi*[1]*, who gives the urge and strength to Saraswati*. Lakshmi is the form responsible for the material affluence bringing the sustenance of Creation. *Maha Lakshmi is Anaghā Devi, urging and empowering Lakshmi*. The force of Creation is the form of Kāli. *Maha Kāli is Anaghā Devi stimulating Kāli and giving Her strength*.

1 The trinity of Lakshmi, Parvati and Saraswati

The form of Anaghā Lakshmi

"Anaghā associated with Anaghā Lakshmi is My Datta form. Anaghā Lakshmi incarnates as a divine form of Mother distinct from the combination of Maha Saraswati, Maha Lakshmi and Maha Kāli. Therefore, note that *Anaghā Lakshmi is the divine shakti supporting the three forms of Maha Saraswati, Maha Lakshmi and Maha Kāli in their integrated state and is superior to all of them. Note that My Anaghā form bears Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra in an integrated state. Know that I keep that Anaghā form — who is the basis for those three, who transcends them, and is the personification of the three shaktis — on My left side in My shākta rūpa*[1].

"As a result of the Sāvitra Kāthaka chayanam[2] *done in Treta Yuga*[3]*, My divine glorious form used Ardhanārīswara tattwa*[4] *as the basis and incarnated in Pīthikapuram along with Vishnu Māya as an ascetic in the form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. Be aware that the shape you see now is in its real state the form of Maha Lakshmi and Maha Vishnu.*

"Know that the Srī Padmavati[5] has in Her consciousness Maha Saraswati, Maha Lakshmi and Maha Kāli. Her form, however, is that of Maha Lakshmi. She is Parāshakti who has the three shaktis and is their support and yet surpasses them. The form of Srī Venkateswara embodies within Him the consciousness of the enormous form of Brahma, the cosmic form of Maha Vishnu and Pralaya Kāla form of Rudra[6]. He is the form of Parabrahma, who is their support and remains far beyond them. Know that Srī Padmavati and Srī Venkateswara are in the shape of Maha Vaishnava Māya as Srīpāda Srīvallabha in the form of Ardhanārīswara rūpa."

Then I said, "Guru Sārvabhūma[7]! Victory, Victory to you! You said you are Padmavati Venkateswara. Again, you said you are Anaghā Lakshmi Sameta Anaghā. For a dull-witted person like me, your nature is not understood even very slightly. Please have mercy on me and help."

1 Masculine form of strength
2 A ritual to the Sun
3 The second of the four yugas
4 The principle of the male-female form of God
5 A form of Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and good fortune
6 The form of Rudra at the time of dissolution of creation
7 The Emperor

Srīpāda is Srī Venkateswara

Then Srīpāda said, "My children! My potencies are infinite. My divine nature has the tendency to manifest in many ways. Even though Maha Lakshmi and Padmavati basically belong to the same nature, when She assumes the character of Maha Lakshmi, Srī Maha Vishnu emerges from Me to be Her consort. When She takes on the characteristic traits of Padmavati, I would allow the essential nature of Venkateswara to emerge from Me. When the primordial nature takes birth with form and attributes, then the suitable references, worldly observances and restrictions have to be followed consistently. This supreme power, who is My divine sister, incarnated as Yoga Māya on the eve of My incarnation as Krishna and travelled into the sky. Great sages, yogis, and Vaishya hermits through their intense penance made Her to originate as Vasavī Kanyaka. *I had to incarnate in Srī Pīthikapuram due to some special reasons. Witness the future programme to the full satisfaction of your eyes. You will understand the important feature of My incarnation and the special sportive play filled with divine delight and mirth. My dear child Shankar Bhatt, write about all the sportive plays that are taking place today on this Panchadeva Pahād. Write about them faithfully in the Charitāmrutam exactly as they are and exactly as you see them. It will be a source of inspiration to the future generations. It will wipe out many serious doubts. It imparts new strength, devotion and enthusiasm for the believers of God."*

While both of us were looking stunned at the spectacle, the figure of Srīpāda Srīvallabha turned into a divine radiance and Srī Padmavati Devi and Srī Venkateswara emerged from there with supreme splendour.

The female divine baby form grew bigger and bigger as we looked and with divine glow it formed into a young Srī Kanyaka Parameswari of eighteen years. The cowshed disappeared and, in its place, a splendid palace appeared with luminous globes spreading divine light all over.

As we were looking, a royal couple with all their servants appeared there. We recognized the royal couple as the Kusuma Sresthi couple. The farmer named Virūpaksha, whom we saw the day before, was seen in the attire of a prince. He asked me, "Sir, what is meant by Mushti in Mushti-Vīra Mushti?" I said, "I don't know."

The great Lord in the form of Srī Venkateswara said, "My dear Shankar Bhatt, did you notice the reverences and traditions while one is in the form and qualities? They should be followed thoroughly. You will slowly understand everything."

From the form of Srī Vasavī Kanyaka, roaring sounds emitted. I was scared and thought that some disaster was going to take place. Meanwhile, nature calmed down and Srī Vasavī Devi and Srī Nagareswara emerged from that Vasavī form. Later, Vaishya sages followed. Vaishya couples approached in pairs. I understood that it was the great royal palace where Srī Vasavī Kanyaka lived in Brihat Sila Nagaram.

Lord Venkateswara said, "My dear Shankar Bhatt, the Vaishya couples that you are witnessing were the same couples who did the Agni Pravesham[1] with Vasavī Kanyaka. These Vaishya rishis belonged to 101 gotras."

In the meantime, Kusuma Sresthi said, "The great guru Bhaskaracharya has not come. Lābhāda Maharshi, who belonged to the 102nd gotra, also did not turn up. My Lord, did not Garudālwar[2] include both of them?"

Then Lord Srīnivasa[3] said, "Oh Vaishya munis, Bhaskarcharya, whom you know, was Lābhāda Maharshi in his previous birth. Now, during My incarnation as Srīpada Srīvallabha, he is in Pīthikapuram as My maternal grandfather. Bapanarya and the meritorious form of Rajamamba are witnessing, with their yogic vision, from Pīthikapuram, the līlas that are happening here."

Meanwhile, Akhanda Lakshmi Sowbhagyavati Sumatī Maharani, Brahmasri Appala Raja Sarma, Akhanda Lakshmi Sowbhagyavati Venkata Subbamamba, Maharishi Venkatappayya Sresthi alighted from a lustrous divine aeroplane with subtle bodies and came in. They were welcomed grandly.

As it was the birthday of Srī Vasavī Kanyaka, Akhanda Lakshmi Sowbhagyavati Sumatī Maharani, Akhanda Lakshmi Sowbhagyavati Kusumamba, Akhanda Lakshmi Sowbhagyavati Venkata Subbamamba and other sacred women did mangala snanam[4] for Srī Vasavī Devi and decorated Her with ornaments. The great Lord Nagareswara was glowing with exceptionally radiant splendour. He was also made to do mangala snanam.

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1 Self-sacrifice by burning oneself to uphold an ideal or Dharma, the divine Law
2 Garuda: the divine eagle, the carrier of Lord Vishnu; Alwar: immersed in God
3 A name of Lord Venkateswara
4 Auspicious bath

Lord Srīnivasa said, "Vaishya munis, eighteen Nagara swamis, Agni Kunda couples! Today is an auspicious day. It is the divine propitious time. I have decided that the engagement ceremony is to be performed today for Srī Vasavī Devi and Srī Nagareswar. For that, I want your suggestions, consent and also want to discuss the customary details as to how it will be performed.

"When Srī Vasavī Kanyaka was in the form of Parvati, the asura Ravana came to Kailash. He urged Shiva[1] to give him atma lingam[2]. Shiva[3] granted it. After that, he asked a wish which was not supposed to be asked. Ambika took the form of Kāli. Later on, the atma lingam also got installed on the Earth at Gokarnam[4].

"However, in Kali Yuga, a Gandharva who was an amsa[5] of Ravana asked for Vasavī. As you know, it was the king Vishnu Vardhana. You also know that Vasavī entered the fire with couples who belonged to 102 gotras. Srī Bhaskaracharya used to raise Gaura Balikas and Bala Nagaras. Srī Vasavī Kanyaka was also a Gaura Balika. It is wise to treat Nagareswara as Bala Nagara and carry out the marriage. But still, there is a hindrance. You only have to solve it. Considering your opinions, we will decide about Srī Vasavī Kanyaka's engagement.

"Srī Nagareswar had no mother or father or gotra. He is self-manifested. But our Kanyaka is desirous of having him as husband by mind, word and action. Srī Nagareswar is also eager to marry our Kanyaka. While performing the ritual of offering the bride to the bridegroom, we should thoroughly think about the bridegroom's caste, gotra and other important things. As per our traditions, cousin marriage is in order. I will abide by your decision."

On hearing the words of Srīnivasa, the pivot for this world's drama, all were astounded. A Gaura Balika should be given only to a Bala Nagara in marriage. They wondered whether they should give her to Shiva[6], who had no caste or gotra. Kanyaka also wanted to marry Srī Nagareswar. To overcome this difficult situation, they thought that they should seek the

1 Here: Parameswara, a name of Shiva
2 The eternal form of the higher Self
3 Here: Bhola Shankar, a name of Shiva
4 A temple town on the western coast of India in the state of Karnataka
5 Partial-manifestations, a part of God that has descended and taken to form
6 Here: Lord Shankarā, a name of Shiva

help of the most learned, Srī Ganapati. They understood that Ganapati's blessings and grace were important for anything to be done. When they prayed, Ganapati manifested. Everyone prostrated to Him. Ganapati said: "Srīnivasa, this Vasavī is indeed My mother Parvati only. So, it is not at all wrong to give Her in marriage to Nagareswar."

Then Srīnivasa said, "My dear Ganesha, you are a boy. You should be capable of clearly understanding dharma and subtle dharma. You are the Lord of the ganās. You are the foremost amongst the thirty million gods and also the head of Pravrithi[1] and Nivrithi[2] ganas[3], so without your order, no marriage is accepted as per dharma. At the time of the marriage of Parvati, you were not born. In that case, the marriage of Parvati is not accepted by dharma."

All the Vaishya elders were bewildered. Keeping aside Srī Vasavī's marriage, Lord Srīnivasa statement that Parvati's marriage was not acceptable was most shocking and they could not utter a single word.

Then, Ganapati said, "My dear clever uncle, I can discern your foul play. Your wish is that the marriage of my mother and father should not take place. During the marriage ceremony, the bridegroom should spend money abundantly by way of giving dakshinas[4] and distributing food. You are ridiculing that my father has no money. I differ with your viewpoint. Every human being has kundalini power. I am present in that mūladhara chakra. So, at the time of the marriage of Parvati and Parameswara, they invited me since I was present in the mūladhara chakra of Shiva[5].The marriage took place with my consent only. So, the marriage of Parvati and Parameswara was very acceptable as per dharma. At that time, my manifestation into the physical world had not yet taken place. But I am present in the mūladhara of all human beings and gods. Lābhāda was born as my son. He was Lābhāda Maharshi in Krita Yuga. The gotra of Lābhāda is among the 102 gotras. Dhana Gupta and Dhana Lakshmi couple, who were the gems of the Ganapa caste, entered the fire which resulted in the end of their progeny. So, cleverly, I begot Lābhāda Maharshi as my son.

1 Living amidst worldly duties
2 Turning within and placing God at the centre
3 Pravrithi and Nivrithi Ganas: the material path and the spiritual path; Ganesha is the Lord of these forces (Ganas).
4 Gifts
5 Here: Lord Shankarā, a name of Shiva

Therfore, our gotra became Labhadi gotra. Since my gotra is Labhadi gotra, my father Paramashiva's gotra is also Labhadi gotra. This Labhadi gotra is one of the 102 gotras of the Ārya Vaishyas. So, even Nagareswara is an Ārya Vaishya. You say you are the brother of Mother Vasavī. At present, Labhadi Maharashi has come as Bapanarya. So, you better take the permission of your grandfather and find out if Nagareswara can be considered as born in Labhadi gotra. Then, it can also be considered as a cousin marriage. It is so because Kusuma Sresthi, who was born in Prabhata gotra, has got relations with the people born in Labhadi gotra. They are related as maternal uncles. Having known that you will create such a hindrance, I allowed Dhana Lakshmi and Dhana Gupta couple to enter into the fire and end their gotra. Srī Nagareswara can be given this gotra. I am giving one more boon from today. Since you are the husband of Lakshmi, people worship you for the grace of Lakshmi. From now onwards, people who worship Shiva and perform abhishekam[1] to Shiva will have the grace of Lakshmi as well. The saying 'Iswaryam Eswaradhicchet' will spread in all parts of the world. If Lord Shiva is worshipped during Sani Pradhosha[2] time, they will have happiness of all the worlds."

Srīnivasa asked the Vaishya elders for their suggestions. All of them in one voice supported what Ganapati said. With great pleasure, the engagement between Vasavī, born in Prabhata gotra, and Nagareswara, of Lābhāda gotra, was performed. In the night, arrangements were made for a big feast. It was all a festive time with dances and music of the apsara girls[3].

Mother Srī Vasavī said, "The count of the 102 gotras is exactly 102 gotras only. It is a mistake to assume that there is no Labhadi Maharshi gotra. The main reason for ending the progeny in the 102nd gotra is that it should belong to the great Lord Srī Nagareswara. The gotra in which I was born is to be considered as Prabhata gotra and Srī Nagareswar gotra should be considered as Labhadi gotra. All Vaishyas should remember the Labhadi gotra. In the same way, they all should worship the great Lord Srī Nagareswara. Although I am in the Kanyaka form, you should recognize that My Lord is present in every atom of Mine. Moreover, I am present in every atom of Srī Nagareswar. If I am worshipped and He is not worshipped, or He is wor-

1 Water ritual
2 Worship of Sani (the embodiment of Saturn) or Lord Shiva on Saturday evening
3 Celestial beings, divine dancers

shipped and I am not worshipped, there will be no result. My Kanyaka form is only for eighteen years. Before that, I was Parameswari. And after this, I will be Parameswari again. If you think of Me as Kanyaka, I will confer you the experience of Kanyaka. If you think of Me as Parameswari, I will give you the dārshan as Sowbhagya Mangala Rūpini.

The idol in Tirupati was worshipped as Bala Tripura Sundari and Eswar

At one time, the idol in Tirumala was worshipped as Bala Tripura Sundari[1]. Later on, it was worshipped as Eswar. Still later, it is being worshipped as the Maha Vishnu form.

The Bala Tripura Sundari form in the idol of Tirumala is Myself. The one in Eswar form is Srī Nagareswar only. The one in the form of Maha Vishnu is My brother Lord Datta.

This oneness should be understood as related to consciousness and not to the physical world."

Lord Srīnivasa said, "Sister, I am at present in the form of Srīpada Srīvallabha in Pīthikapuram. You should be there In My Samsthan as My sister." Ambika said, "Brother, this is acceptable to Me. Before this, You should come in the form of Srī Venkateswara to the Kanyaka Parameswari Maha Samasthan in Brihat Sila Nagaram." Lord Srīnivasa, the pivot of this world drama, smiled.

Srī Vasavī Devi's birthday was thus celebrated grandly. On the next day, the place remained as an ordinary cowshed. Having completed the early morning errands, we started towards Kurungadda.

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

1 Beautiful Goddess beyond the three worlds; the Divine Mother

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 29

Explanation of Couples who Did Agni Pravesham

After reaching Kurungadda we had the dārshan of Srīpāda. Following His command we sat in His presence. Srīpāda graciously gave us the following message.

Srīpāda saves those who surrender to Him

"My dear ones, you were fortunate to see the birthday celebration of Srī Vasavī yesterday. *Time and place are play balls in My hand. I can change events which are to happen, or which are happening, or which will happen, into past or present or future times. I can order space and time to appear as endless journeys, however much you may try. You can comprehend Me only according to the level of your consciousness. When you renounce all dharmas and take refuge in Me, who exists as your inner self, and perform actions in accordance with My instructions, I will shoulder all your loads and take you to the shore. As I can command nature merely with a word, I will become famous with the name of Saraswati.* People of this Kali Yuga[1] are like Hiranyakasipus[2]. Their problems, ideas, thoughts and ways are very complicated. They develop materially a great deal in the knowledge of nature and obtain boons from Mother Nature like Hiranyakasipu. *Accordingly, I have to take an incarnation like Narasimha*[3] *in this Kali Yuga to protect innocent devotees like Prahlāda. Therefore, I will take another great incarnation in the name of Narasimha Saraswati and will become very famous in Gandharvapura."*

1 Dark age
2 A demon in the Puranic scriptures
3 An avatar of Vishnu as Man-Lion

The story of Kanyaka Parameswari — Order

Later on, He told about Mother Srī Vasavī. "A saint named Samadhi was a devotee of the World Mother[1]. He was later born as Kusuma Sresthi. Adhya Shakti took birth as his daughter under the name Vasavī. Vishnu Vardhana asks for something, which he should not have asked. Ārya Vysayas contemplated that it was better to jump into the fire pit and safeguard their honour. Srī Vasavī granted dārshan as Ārya Mahadevi, with a delightful luster, to Her parents and relatives in other gotras. Unable to witness that great luster, many of them fell unconscious. Then, Ambika withdrew Her lustrous form and assumed an ordinary looking Vasavī Kanyaka form. She told her Vaishya people, 'Mothers and fathers, as soon as we merge in the fire ritual, Vimaladitya's head will shatter into thousand pieces. You always keep in mind that the supporting God of Vaishyas is Srī Nagareswara. The one known as Vindhyavasini is no other than Me. Service to cows and Brahmins, worship of family gods and gotra worship are to be performed meticulously. I benevolently assure all of you. If you pursue all these rules and regulations, it is certain that you will hear the music of My anklets in your houses and in your hearts. The vibrations of Lakshmi will be radiant in your houses. You will be successful and will be bestowed with all comforts and auspiciousness in this world and will reach Kailash and will also be happy there'."

I asked, "Oh great Lord, who are the couples who entered the fire pit? What are their gotras? Please let me know." The Lord was very happy and said, "The people belonging to only these 102 gotras are called as Ārya Vaishyas. One who remembers the names of the couples who entered the fire pit along with Srī Vasavī Kanyaka, who was Ārya Maha Devi, will be relieved of their sins.

Description of gotras

"Dhanada and Dhanalakshmi who belonged to the gotra of Lābhāda Maharshi are to be remembered initially. Listen to the gotras of Ārya Vysayas:

1 Here: Jaganmatha

1. The Prabhatasa gotra belonging to Mandavya Rishi.
2. The Manavasa gotra belonging to Mandavya Rishi.
3. The Gargyasa gotra belonging to Angirasa.
4. The Gopakasa gotra belonging to Rishi Gopaka.
5. The Puthimashasa gotra belonging to Puthimasha Muni.
6. The Sri Vatsasa gotra belonging to Srī Vatsa Muni.
7. The Kanwasa gotra belonging to Maharshi Kanwa.
8. The Kandarpasa gotra belonging to Rishi Kandarpa.
9. The Galubhyasa gotra belonging to Rishi Galubhyasa.
10. The Deva Valkyasa gotra belonging to Deva Valkya.
11. The Maitreyasa gotra belonging to Maitreya.
12. The Sanakasa gotra belonging to Maharshi Sanaka.
13. The Uttamojasa gotra belonging to Angirasa Muni. There is a specialty to this Uttamojasa gotra. Angīrasa who worshipped fire later got the name Uttarotarā Narada.
14. The Vamadevasa gotra belonging to Rishi Vamadeva.
15. The Kasyapasa gotra belonging to Kasyapa Muni.
16. The Jaratkarasa gotra belonging to Jaratkara Muni.
17. The Durvasana gotra belonging to Surīkshana Muni.
18. The Mūdgalyasa gotra belonging to Mūdgalya.
19. The Atreyasa gotra belonging to Atreya Rishi.
20. The Jatukarnasa gotra belonging to Jātukarna Muni.
21. The Pūndrakasa gotra belonging to Pūndrika Muni.
22. The Subrahmanyasa gotra belonging to Rishi Dhūmya.
23. The Vayavyasa gotra belonging to Rishi Vayavya.
24. The Pārāsharya gotra belonging to Rishi Parāsara.
25. The Pūlatsyasa gotra belonging to Rishi Pūlatsya.
26. The Agatsyasa gotra belonging to Rishi Agatsya.
27. The Gauthamasa gotra belonging to Gauthama Muni.
28. The Bodhayanasa gotra belonging to Rishi Bharghava.
29. The Maskasa gotra belonging to Jai Muni.
30. The Harivalkasa gotra belonging to Mathanga Muni.
31. The Vyapasa gotra belonging to Samvartha Muni.
32. TheVishwaksenasa gotra belonging to Viswaksena.
33. The Sandilyasa gotra belonging to Rishi Tumbura.
34. The Vishnu Vruddha gotra belonging to Rishi Pushala.

35. The Vairohityasa gotra belonging to Rishi Varuna.
36. The Sukanchanasa gotra belonging to Rishi Sukanchana.
37. The Parathanthusa gotra belonging to Parathanthu Muni.
38. The Pavitra Patanisa gotra belonging to Rishi Devala.
39. The Pingalasa gotra belonging to Rishi Pingala.
40. The Kapilasa gotra belonging to Kapila Muni.
41. The Bharadwajasa gotra belonging to Bharadwaja.
42. The Muni Rajasa gotra belonging to Rishi Muni Raja.
43. The Rushya Srungasa gotra belonging to Rushya Srunga.
44. The Mandapalasa gotra belonging to Mandapala.
45. The Ugrasenasa gotra belonging to Rishi Ugrasena.
46. The Markhandeyasa gotra belonging to Rishi Markhandeya.
47. The Mūnjayanasa gotra belonging to Manjadratula.
48. The Yajnavalkasa gotra belonging to Rishi Yajnavalkya.
49. The Babhreyasa gotra belonging to Rishi Babhi.
50. The Prachinasa gotra belonging to Prachīna.
51. The Srīdharasa gotra belonging to Sridhara.
52. The Jadabharatasa gotra belonging to Jadabharata.
53. The Thithirasa gotra belonging to Gargya.
54. The Kūndinyasa gotra belonging to Kūndinya.
55. The Kapītharasa gotra belonging to Vedanidhi.
56. The Bhargavasa gotra belonging to Maharshi Brughu.
57. The Samvarthasa gotra belonging to Samvartha.
58. The Trijatasa gotra belonging to Hayagrīva.
59. The Valmīkasa gotra belonging to Valmika.
60. The Tyteyasa gotra belonging to Pavithrapani.
61. The Marīchasa gotra belonging to Marīcha.
62. The Sowvarnasa gotra belonging to Bhodhayana.
63. The Ūchitsasa gotra belonging to Sarabh Muni.
64. The Kantheyasa gotra belonging to Rishi Kamyaka.
65. The Sātyasa gotra belonging to Satyavratha.
66. The Sanatkumarasa gotra belonging to Mahasena.
67. The Kūtsasa gotra belonging to Kūtsa.
68. The Vatukasa gotra belonging to Sthula Sirassu.
69. The Sūcheyasa gotra belonging to Krishna Dwaipayana.
70. The Jambasudhanasa gotra belonging to Madhava.

71. The Devarathasa gotra belonging to Devaratha.
72. The Sharabhangasa gotra belonging to Sharabhanga.
73. The Netrapadasa gotra belonging to Netrapada. In this gotra Dhūmya is being called as Netrapada Dhūmya in Netrapada Vamsam[1].
74. The Grutsnamadasa gotra belonging to Vishnu Vruddha Muni.
75. The Chakrapanisa gotra belonging to Chakrapani Muni.
76. The Jīvanthisa gotra belonging to Bruhaspathi.
77. The Vasishtasa gotra belonging to Vasishta.
78. The Sūnakasa gotra belonging to Thuryavratha.
79. The Suvarnasa gotra belonging to Rishi Mūsala.
80. The Sūvarnasa gotra belonging to Rishi Angīrasa.
81. The Sanandanasa gotra belonging to Sanandana.
82. The Utkrushtasa gotra belonging to Pundarīka.
83. The Sukhlasa gotra belonging to Angīrasa.
84. The Pundarīkasa gotra belonging to Pundarīka.
85. The Krishnasa gotra belonging to Krishna.
86. The Tharanisa gotra belonging to Trijatu.
87. The Pallavasa gotra belonging to Pallava Muni.
88. The Mūsalasa gotra belonging to Chathushkarnu.
89. The Acchayanasa gotra belonging to Aswalayana.
90. The Sundarasa gotra belonging to Sūndarya Muni.
91. The Varunasa gotra belonging to Varuna.
92. The Vasudevasa gotra belonging to Jabali.
93. The Sharangavasa gotra belonging to Sharangarava.
94. The Suthīkshanasa gotra belonging to Suthīkshana.
95. The Sūmyasa gotra belonging to Sūmya.
96. The Parasparayanasa gotra belonging to Pūlasthyu.
97. The Kūsikasa gotra belonging to Kūsika.
98. The Chāmaranasa gotra belonging to Prethmanaska.
99. The Jabalasa gotra belonging to Rishi Sanat Kumara.
100. The Naradasa gotra belonging to Rishi Pāvana.
101. The Bruhavasrusa gotra belonging to Rishi Bruhadīsha.
102. The Viswamitrasa gotra belonging to Rishi Viswamitra.

"My dear, these are 102 gotras."

1 Family line

Srī Dharma Gupta said to Srīpāda, "Victory and victory to Mahaguru. The Lābhādi gotra is not included in the 102 gotras you specified. If you add the Lābhādi gotra, it will be 103. Lord, please clear my doubt." Then, Srīpāda said, "The Lābhāda Maharshi gotra has another name as Dhanadakula gotra. The Kasyapasa gotra which is related to Lābhāda Maharshi is there. In the Prabhata gotra, besides Abhiramamba and Ramachandrarya couple, there was Kusumamba and Kusuma Sresthi couple who entered the fire pit. The Dhanadakula gotra related to Lābhāda Maharshi is there. The Kasyapasa gotra ended. Since the Kasyapasa gotra ended and the Dhanadakula gotra is continuing, there were a total of 102 gotras. When Srī Vasavī Kanyaka's marriage with Srī Nagareswara takes place at the end of Kali Yuga, Srī Vasavī Kanyakamba's gotra should be read as Prabhata gotra and that of Srī Nagareswara as Kasyapasa gotra. This is the subtle dharma in this. As long as Srī Vasavī is treated as Kanyaka, the Dhanadakula gotra should be considered in 102 gotras. At the end of Kali Yuga, the Lābhāda Maharshi gotra should be known as Kasyapasa gotra. By the end of Kali Yuga, the Dhanadakula gotra will come to an end."

Names of couples who entered the fire

Srīpāda gave the details of the couples who entered the fire in this way:

1. Abhirmamba — Ramachandradu
2. Brahmaramba — Balarka Sreshti
3. Rajamukhi — Rajendra Gupta
4. Rajyalakshmi — Dravinaraja Sresthi
5. Samadarsini — Somadudu
6. Kīrthikanta — Utpalakshudu
7. Bhimamba — Prithvisa Gupta
8. Pushpamba — Bhuvanadhapa Sresthi
9. Chitrabhashini — Chitrashubhagaryulu
10. Balamai — Baladeva Sresthi
11. Ragamajam — Raghakhya Sresthi
12. Pallavamba — Pālāhvaya Sresthi
13. Narīmani — Nagakhya Sresthi
14. Dhanalakshmi — Dhana Gupta

15. Rukhmavathi — Pavana Sresthi
16. Chandramukhi — Puthathmacharyulu
17. Dharmamba — Uttamahvaya Sresthi
18. Amruthabhashini — Gauthama Sresthi
19. Pallavamba — Mallakhya Sresthi
20. Vichakshnāngi — Rakshahvaya Sresthi
21. Chandrarekha — Shringadhama Sresthi
22. Jahnavi — Jamadagni Gupta
23. Kalavathi — Chandrakhya Sresthi
24. Nīlamba — Nandakhya Sresthi
25. Pallavapani — Vallabha Sresthi
26. Anumitha — Anantha Sresthi
27. Pothamamba — Bhogakhya Sresthi
28. Vimala — Kapilacharyulu
29. Abhinavamba — Amala Sresthi
30. Taravali — Vamanacharyulu
31. Kanakangi — Kumudakhya Sresthi
32. Indumukhi — Vidakhya Sresthi
33. Kamalavathi — Ganasatva Sresthi
34. Chanchalakshmi — Pavanakhya Sresthi
35. Bramaramani — Dhanthunamaryudu
36. Manjuvani — Sundarkhya Sresthi
37. Āryamamba — Mallakhya Sresthi
38. Kundaradana — Govinda Gupta
39. Abjamukhi — Jamadagni Sresthi
40. Kamalakshi — Samadakhya Sresthi
41. Dharanidevi — Kumara Sresthi
42. Hallakamba — Pardhivacharyulu
43. Dhanalaxmi — Dhanada Gupta
44. Lolamba — Lokahvyayva Sresthi
45. Kamalavathi — Gaurakhya Sresthi
46. Soudamini — Bambharacharyulu
47. Chandrakala — Chandramouli Sresthi
48. Thanumadhya — Dhrutasatya Sresthi
49. Sudharsini — Saudhakya Sresthi
50. Subhodhini — Simhasenacharyulu

51. Mohini — Pavithrapani Sresthi
52. Kusumamba — Kusuma Sresthi
53. Balamani — Janardhana Sresthi
54. Dhanthavathi — Amruthakhya Sresthi
55. Samasīla — Samalakhya Sresthi
56. Chitrarekha — Kusalahvaya Sresthi
57. Bhamamani — Bhaskaracharyulu
58. Mani Manjari — Aditya Gupta
59. Dhanavathi — Dharmakhya Sresthi
60. Shyamalamba — Krishna Sresthi
61. Saraswati — Parasiva Sresthi
62. Kalivathamsa — Balaka Sresthi
63. Hema Rekha — Swarnaradha Sresthi
64. Manishalaka — Kandarpa Sresthi
65. Medhamba — Markandeya Sresthi
66. Prithvi Devi — Prudhunama Sresthi
67. Dhanadamba — Mūlaryulu
68. Prollasini — Punyarasi Gupta
69. Bimbadhari — Pīnapaksharyulu
70. Pallavamba — Bhogakhya Sresthi
71. Hemangi — Mruthsyadwajaryulu
72. Devamba — Bhogakhya Sresthi
73. Ibhayana — Nagahvyaya Sresthi
74. Bhumamba — Brahmaryulu
75. Vidhuramba — Madhavaryulu
76. Somaprabha — Simhadwaja Sresthi
77. Kambukanthi — Kapilaryulu
78. Vasanthika — Ardhanarīsa Sresthi
79. Pipulamba — Nagadwaja Sresthi
80. Manjuvani — Gunapunja Gupta
81. Nīlaveni — Bhanu Gupta
82. Krishnamba — Nagahvyaya Sresthi
83. Pushpadhama — Vidakhya Gupta
84. Prabhavathi — Padmanabha Sresthi
85. Navanīthangi — Vinnakhya Sresthi
86. Vinnamamba — Vishwanatha Sresthi

87. Medhamba — Vīrabhadraryulu
88. Gangabhavani — Vidhyadhara Sresthi
89. Chitrangi — Vinnavarenya Sresthi
90. Sundari — Jīmutha Sresthi
91. Rajamukhi — Rajeswara Sresthi
92. Uthrulakshi — Punditharyulu
93. Padmagandhi — Balabhanu Sresthi
94. Satyavathi — Satyasandha Sresthi
95. Chandramba — Jaladakya Sresthi
96. Pavanidevi — Chandrabana Sresthi
97. Padmakshi — Meghasena Gupta
98. Chapalakshi — Simhamukha Sresthi
99. Manimala — Ghanamukharyulu
100. Davani — Nirjalasena Gupta
101. Līlavathi — Janardhana Gupta
102. Kumudavalli — Sudharshana Sresthi."

After telling these details, Srīpāda went into meditation. He also told us to be in meditation.

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 30

Srīpāda Personally Announces that Srīpāda Srīvallabha Maha Samsthanam will be Established

The reason behind Vasavī's Agni Pravesham[1]

Srīpāda Srīvallabha came out of meditation. Srī Dharma Gupta asked, "Oh great Lord! Victory to you! Why did Ārya Maha Devi, in the form of Vasavī, along with couples of 102 gotras had to enter into the fire pit? With Her will, she could have broken the head of Vishnu Vardhana, who was Vimaladitya, into 1,000 pieces." Srīpāda said with a smile on his lotus face, "My dear, when Mahalakshmi came as Godadevi, she served Srī Ranganadha with loving affection and merged in Her Lord.

The speciality of Agni Vidya

"Kusuma Sresthi was a Vaishya rishi previously called Samadhi. In accordance with the boon given by Her in a previous birth, Ārya Mahadevi manifested as Srī Vasavī Kanyaka. Agni Vidya[2] is the most difficult vidya. A person has to kindle his divine light[3], sanctify his 72,000 nadis[4] and many sub-nadis, achieve transformation, express the power in him slowly, and merge with Adya Shakti. Then he would attain the state of sayujya[5] with Adya Shakti, who always remains one with the great Lord. This is Agni Vidya. This is a very tough vidya.

"Living beings have sixty-four stages of consciousness. The people of Nathā tradition employ sixty-four Sābara mantras to acquire a state of

1 Entering the fire
2 Knowledge of Agni
3 Here: Atma Jyoti
4 Subtle nerve tracts
5 The state of union with God

oneness with these sixty-four stages of consciousness and uplift the living beings. Dattatreya Himself is the Ādiguru[1] of the Nathā people. This figure of Srīpāda Srīvallabha which is present before you is actually Datta of the yore!

"There are sixty-four squares on a chessboard. When it is said that Srī Maha Vishnu plays the entertaining game of chess with Srī Maha Lakshmi, there is an inner meaning to it. As a witness, He looks at the process of expansion and evolution of life of various living beings who are in these sixty-four stages of consciousness and He gives the appropriate grace to facilitate the transformations and thus enjoys the divine entertainment.

Qualifications required for a man to become a divine soul

"The rate of transformation of the humans depends on the level of their consciousness. It is an inviolable law of the universal mind that a man should transform to a divine soul. The illumination of the light of ātma[2] depends on the yogic methods, mantra, yagna, other sacrificial rites and philanthropic acts that are performed by the humans according to their levels of perfection. The purification of the nadis goes on according to that illumination. Depending upon their purification level, people will get the related physical, mental and spiritual powers. Divine grace will depend upon the virtuous deeds done by them when those faculties or forces develop.

"The propitious powers of Saraswati, Lakshmi and Durga remain in the form of seeds in a human being and when appropriate situations arise for them to grow, Ambika's natural grace overflows and gets articulated.

"When Ārya Maha Devi was born as Srī Vasavī, such situation arose only for those couples who belonged to the 102 gotras. So, Ambika also entered the fire along with them and the couples transformed into forms of light[3] of the same level as that of the devas. Due to the power of the prayers of the people belonging to those gotras, they will get attracted and give their blessings.

1 First guru
2 Here: Ātmajyoti
3 Here: Jyoti forms

"With the blessings, people of these gotras will have immense happiness not only here but also in other worlds. That's why Ārya Vaishyas should very cautiously notice this specialty of Agni Yoga and be aware of the stimulus of fire[1] in the form of dharma and karma in them and blaze the fire in them. Thus, they should transfer the fruits of this Agni Yoga to their future generations. The dharma and karma agni that is kindled in one family will continue to radiate for seven generations. At least if the seventh-generation people again kindle the stimulus of agni in the form of dharma and karma, the fire will be rejuvenated. As long as that fire keeps glowing, those families will have all eight types of comforts and wealth in their houses.

"Things that are not yet manifested into the objectivity are manifested through fire. People will have to face many types of troubles, losses and worldly problems due to the effects of great sins made in the previous births. These effects of sin can be destroyed through mantra, tantra, yoga, donation and righteous deeds, thereby happiness can be gained. Fire also changes expressed things into unexpressed forms. The great sins being done at present by the living beings go into an unexpressed form. They express themselves again in the next birth. If one performs a great sin or a great merit, the major part of the result will be experienced in this birth only.

"Thus, if men do propitious actions in this birth, the meritorious vibrations related to those deeds will be taken away in unexpressed form by Agni Deva. They will be expressed in the next birth. In accordance with Ārya Maha Devi, Agni Yoga has fortified people of 102 gotras and the Janyu Devatas[2], who safeguard the seeds belonging to the line of those rishis, preserve those graceful and extremely positive vibrations. To attain them into the expressed state of those gotras, one should perform meritorious deeds.

"By performing meritorious deeds, along with the results of his merited actions, one will also acquire many more positive vibrations present in the form of seeds. As a result of that, even a small merit acquired will yield great results. This is all due to the grace showered by Srī Vasavī and the result of the sacrifice of those couples who did Agni Pravesham.

"My dear, as I said, it is not wrong to think that taking birth in an Ārya Vaishya family is a great opportunity. There is a special condition here.

1 Here: Agni

2 The Devas of germination and reproduction; in this book they are also accredited with the transmission of past generations' karma to the present generation.

Having been born as an Ārya Vaishya, if one does not perform meritorious deeds and does sinful acts, the result for those sinful acts will also be great. For this, the curse of those couples who entered the fire and the curse of Srī Kanyaka Parameswari will be added. The result of a sin done by an Ārya Vaishya will be thousand times more than the result of a sin committed by a normal man. Therefore, grasp the fact that to be born in one of those 102 gotras is very fortunate and also highly dangerous. Be vigilant; know that Srī Vasavī Devi is My divine sister. Also recognize the fact that We both are twins born because of the Agni Yoga of Mother Anasuya. If We turn out to be angry, all calamities will occur. If We are contented, all fortunate things will occur."

I asked Srī Maha Guru, "Great Lord, victory to You. Srī Vasavī Kanyaka requested You to come to Her Samsthan in the form of Venkateswara. Please explain its meaning."

"Shankar Bhatt, know that My Maha Samsthan will be established in Pīthikapuram at My birthplace.

"You are writing the Charitāmrutam. The authenticity of the things written in it will be questioned by some fools. They will question how to believe that Srīpāda Srīvallabha is indeed Srī Padmavati Venkateswara. To give authenticity to this fact that Ārya Mahadevi took the form of Srī Vasavī Kanyaka, I will be established in Brihat Sila Nagaram in the form of Lord Venkateswara. This will take place before the Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam comes into light. This is My determination. When there are so many other forms, why will My Venkateswara form get established there? Do the people who establish Lord Venkateswara there know anything? This is My līla[1]. I will be instituted there as Venkateswara. People who establish the Samsthan do not know how the Srīpāda Srīvallabha Maha Samsthan will be formed and how the Charitāmrutam will be brought to light. With the support of most innocent people and foolish people, I will get My work completed; this is a part of My divine enjoyment. My Samsthan will be established by Ārya Vaishyas. I will get a temple of Srī Vasavī Kanyaka built in Pīthikapuram by the descendents of Srī Bapanārya family. Although this appears strange evidently, My devotees will know the verity that I and Srī Vasavī Kanyaka are brother and sister.

1 Sportive play

"My dear, at the end of Kali Yuga, i.e., in Kali Maha Yuga, when Kali's antardasa[1] is completed and subsequent to the transition period of yuga sandhi, I will come to Tirumala[2] in My own form. Later on, I will visit some other divine places. I will come to My Maha Samasthan in Pīthikapuram. I will take bath in the Ela River. I will visit Kukkuteswara. The maha siddhas and maha yogis who come along with Me to the Maha Samasthan will be blessed.

"Srī Pīthikapuram, Syāmalāmbapuram[3] and Vāyasapura agrahāram put together will become a great city. People who come to My Maha Samasthan for My dārshan, will be like rows of ants. I ordered Virupāksha, who was along with Vasavī during her incarnation, to come to birth again. I will make him the ruler of India. He will have My dārshan in Pīthikapuram and later will gain the knowledge of his previous birth.

"My dear, many strange things will take place in Kali Yuga. A great sādhaka[4] hailing to the Vasishta lineage will be appointed as a priest in Srīpāda Srīvallabha Maha Samasthan. There would be no end to the divine līlas I perform through him. Every moment will be filled with divine plays and divine bliss. I will have to pay off the loan to Kubera. Ārya Mahadevi was born in the family of Kubera as Vasavī Kanyaka. She should be given in marriage to Srī Nagareswara. I do not like to take the required money again from Kubera for the marriage. Therefore, I have decided to show līlas to the members of the Kubera family and the sons of Lakshmi and eliminate their troubles and then take money from them as My tax. It was Me who granted wealth to Kubera. So, it was Me who gave Mushti[5] to Kubera. Now I am immersed in a tremendous debt. So, I am taking Mushti from Kubera. The Mushti in Mushti is called Vīra Mushti. Seeking Mushti with honour and pomposity is called Vīra Mushti." Even thousand births are not enough to see the divine smile of Srīpāda.

1 Interim period
2 A hill town in the south of Andhra Pradesh with the famous Lord Venkateswara temple
3 Today the town of Samalkota/Samalarkota near Kakinada, in Andhra Pradesh
4 Spiritual seeker
5 Alms

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 31

Description of Dasa Mahā Vidyas

We used to come to the other side of the Krishna River bank every evening after getting the permission of Srīpāda. In the morning, we used to again arrive on this side. In the form of prasād from Srī Maha Guru, we were learning new yogic matters and many divine secrets. I heard that Srī Devi is worshipped through dasa maha vidya[1] practices. I beseeched Srī Charan to tell us the nature of those dasa maha vidyas. Srī Guru Sārvabhūma[2] elaborated in the following manner.

"Dear children, adoration of Srī Vidya is highly supreme. In ancient times, Agastya obtained Srī Vidya by the grace of Hayagrīva[3]. He taught it to his wife Lopa Mudra Devi. Srī Lopa Mudra Devi explained the esoteric meanings of Srī Vidya to Agastya. In one way, Lopa Mudra Devi became the preceptor of Agastya. In another way, Agastya became the preceptor of Lopa Mudra. This was very wonderful.

The history of Lopa Mudra and Agastya

"The king of Vidarbha had a daughter on account of the power of penance of Agastya. She was named Lopa Mudra. Agastya wanted to marry her. The Vidarbha king faced a difficult situation. He was afraid that the old hermit might curse him if he refused to offer his daughter. He was in a dilemma whether to perform this marriage between two people of disproportionate ages.

When the king consulted his daughter, she told him that she was born exclusively for Agastya and that she will marry him only. After the marriage, his royal daughter wore saris made of tree barks and went to the

1 Ten different forms of the divine feminine; ten goddesses of wisdom
2 The Emperor
3 A horse-headed deity; God of knowledge and wisdom

lands of penance along with her husband. Agastya taught Lopa Mudra Devi about Srī Vidya.

"After some days he wanted to have a physical union with her. Then she said to Agastya, 'After worshipping Lalitha Devi, I became a form of Lalitha. Unless you turn to be a form of Shiva, it is not possible to have a physical union with you.' Agastya undertook intense penance and attained the form of Shiva and again asked for a physical union with her. She said, 'I am born in a royal family. It is not possible to have marital relationship with you unless I have silk clothes, ornaments, and all kinds of wealth required for a Kshatriya woman. So, unless all the material things mentioned by me are procured, it is not right to enjoy conjugal comfort with me. Not only that. You should also wear silk robes and costly ornaments and apply aromatic perfumes. Then only it is appropriate to have sexual enjoyment with me.' To earn a lot of money, Agastya went to a devil, Ilvala, and digested his brother Vātāpi by a trick. He got great wealth from that demon. After satisfying his wife's desires, Agastya begot good children.

"Ilvala and Vātāpi were two brothers. Vātāpi would take the form of a goat. Ilvala would kill that goat and serve it in the meals to the guest. After the guest finished the meals, Ilvala used to call Vātāpi to come out. Vātāpi used to come out tearing the stomach of the guest. Then both devils used to make a meal out of the dead guest. However, after Agastya ate the flesh of the goat, Ilvala called Vātāpi to come out, but Agastya said, 'Let Vātāpi be digested'[1]. Vātāpi was digested as per the wish of Agastya. As promised by him, Ilvala gave huge amounts of money to Agastya. People were rid of the menace of Vātāpi and Ilvala.

"Once, Agastya attracted the water in the seven seas into his kamandalu[2] and drank it. The same Sage Agastya subdued the pride of Vindhya Mountain. He is in South India even today in the form of a great siddha. He is the one who introduced Tamil language. He constructed temples in many places. When I come in the incarnation of Lord Kalki, Agastya, like Parashurama[3], will exist as a guru.

1 'Jīrnam jīrnam, Vātāpi jīrnam'
2 Small pot made of wood, earth, metal or dried pumpkin used by yogis or ascetics
3 The 6th avatar of Vishnu

Dasa Maha Vidyas of Devi

"Kāli is the first form in dasa maha vidyas. Maha Kāli is the beginning of all arts and sciences. The glories of Her vidyas are termed as Maha Vidyas. At one time, all the celestials prayed to Maha Māya in the hermitage of Sage Mātanga. Ambika appeared in the form of a Mātanga woman. As She was in thick dark colour in pitch black hue, She got the name of Kāli. She killed the devils called Shumba and Nishumba. As Kāli was in dark blue colour, She is also regarded under the name of Tāra. People worship Kāli to get the fruit of yoga sādhana within a few days or months, which would otherwise take many years. However, during the time of spiritual exercise when the power of Kāli is attracted into the body, the yogi would suffer unbearable burning sensation akin to raging flames and pain.

"Tāra is the second form in dasa maha vidyas. She always grants salvation and liberation. Therefore, She became famous under the name of Tāra. She is also called under the name of Nīla Saraswati. She rescues devotees from horrible accidents. Therefore, yogis worship Her in the form of Ugra Tāra. Sage Vasishta is a great devotee of Tāra. The night of Chaitra[1] Suddha Navami[2] is called Tāra Rātri.

"Chinna Masta is the third form in dasa maha vidyas. This is a very esoteric one. Once Devi, along with Her friends Jaya and Vijaya, went to the Mandakini River for a bath. After the bath, She suffered from pangs of hunger and turned into a black colour. Her friends asked her about meals. When the compassionate Devi severed Her head with a sword to feed them, the disjoined head fell into Her left hand. Three bloodstreams flowed from Her torso. Her companions drank two jets of blood while Devi drank the third jet of blood Herself. She became famous under the name of Chinna Masta. Hiranya Kasipa[3] and others were devotees of this Chinna Masta Devi.

"Shodasi Maheswari is the fourth form in dasa maha vidyas. Her heart is filled with compassion. For people who take shelter under Her, knowledge becomes easily accessible. All mantras and tantras in the universe adore that Maha Vidya Shakti. Even the Vedas cannot describe Her. This

1 Nakshatra constellation in the month of Aries
2 9th day of the first two weeks of the month
3 An asura (demon)

Maha Shakti, when pleased, fulfils all the wishes of the devotees. By worshipping this goddess, both wealth and liberation are achieved.

"Bhuvaneswari Devi is the fifth form in dasa maha vidyas. All the seventy million mantras worship Her always. There are ten stages emerging from Kāli tattwa[1] up to Kamala tattwa[2]. From them, unmanifest Bhuvaneswari reveals Herself and assumes the Brahmanda[3] shape.

"During the time of final destruction[4] from Kamala, i.e., the manifested universe, She merges gradually in the form of Kāli and transforms into the seed form[5]. Therefore, She is also called Janmadhātri[6] of kāla[7].

"Tripura Bhairavi is the sixth form in dasa maha vidyas. The force which pacifies the situations arising out of the special state of kāla is called Tripura Bhairavi. This Tripura Bhairavi is said to be the indivisible force of Lord Narasimha[8]. Transformation always takes place in Creation. Attraction and repulsion are the basic causes for this. It is a relentless process. Tripura Bhairavi is called as Kāla Rātri during night. The name of Bhairava is Kāla Bhairava. My ensuing incarnation as the Srī Narasimha Saraswati incarnation is a combination of the above two entities. It is Tripura Bhairavi and Kāla Bhairava incarnation for great yogis.

"Dhūmrāvati is the seventh form in dasa maha vidyas. This Dhūmrāvati is none else than Ugra Tāra. By seeking Her refuge, all calamities are destroyed and riches are gained. In religious treatises, She is described as one who wards off all complex troubles. Albeit, She is responsible for the miserable conditions of the living beings, such as hunger and thirst, quarrels and poverty. With Her grace all troubles are removed far away.

"Bagalā Mukhi is the eighth form in dasa maha vidyas. This Mother is worshipped for removing the misfortunes causing grief in the country and community and also the worldly and super natural calamities, and to subdue enemies. The foremost and first worshipper of Bagalā Maha Vidya

1 Essence of Kāli
2 The essence of Kamala, the 10th of the Dasa Maha vidyas
3 The Cosmic Egg
4 Prālaya
5 Mūla Prakriti
6 One who gives birth
7 Time
8 The 4th avatar of Lord Vishnu in the form of the Man-Lion

was Lord Brahma. Lord Vishnu and Parashurama[1] were also devotees of Bagalā Mukhi Devi. For a long time, the idol of Venkateswara in Tirumala was worshipped as Bagalā Mukhi.

"Mātangi is the ninth form in dasa maha vidyas. Mātangi has the capacity to give a comfortable life of a householder and grant the four purushārdās[2]. She is also called as the daughter of Sage Mātanga.

"Kamalālaya is the tenth form in dasa maha vidyas. She is a symbol of affluence. Since She was worshipped by Bhārgava, She got the name of Bhārgavi. By Her grace, one gets the landlordship and high fame. She is the symbol of great abundance of material wealth. She is also called Padmavati Devi. She is the consort of Lord Venkateswara in Tirumala[3].

"My dear children, I will teach you the nature of dasa maha vidyas after deciding how much to be taught on each day and by whom. For those who worship Anaghādevi, who is the embodiment of dasa maha vidyas, and Her Lord Anagha[4], the grace of their children ashta siddhis is granted. *You observe Anaghāshtami*[5] *every month on bahula ashtami*[6]. *All your desires will fructify. Shankar Bhatt, those who make a pārāyana of the Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam authored by you and perform Anaghāshtami vrata on the waxing or waning eighth moon phase immediately following pārāyana, and feed eleven people or utilize that equivalent money in any Datta temple will derive results at once.*

The efficacy of devoted reading of Charitāmrutam

"Don't think that the Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam is a mere book. It is a live stream of a glorious consciousness. When you make a devoted

1 The 6th avatar of Vishnu
2 Literally: object of human pursuit; relates to four goals: Dharma (righteousness, living in accordance with the Law) Ardha (prosperity), Kāma (pleasure, love) and Moksha (liberation)
3 A hill town in the south of Andhra Pradesh with the famous Lord Venkateswara temple
4 The trinity of Lakshmi, Parvati and Saraswati
5 A ritual of prayer to Anagha Devi, the female form of Srīpada, for fulfilling one's desires
6 A day for rituals observed on the 8th day of waning moon phases in every month

reading, the strength of those letters will flow into My mental consciousness. Since you have a connection with Me without being aware of it, all your rightful desires will be fulfilled by My mercy. Even when this great book is preserved in your room of worship, it will cause auspicious vibrations. Forces of misfortune and spirits of darkness will be driven away.

"Those who abuse or criticize the Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam knowingly or unknowingly will forfeit all the merits of their virtuous deeds in many births. The angels of dharma will take away the fruits of virtuous deeds part by part and will distribute them to the worthy, poor people. In this way, you will become poor and the poor will become rich. It is declared on solemn oath that every letter of this book is true. It is a standard by itself. People who abuse or criticize this will lose their amassed merits in instalments and will ultimately become poor. To remove the pain of penury, read this book with care and devotion."

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 32

Description of Nava Nādhas

After touching the lotus feet of Srīpāda SrīVallabha, I asked, "Lord, I have heard that there are great siddha yogis named as Nava Nādhas and that they are partial manifestations of Lord Datta. Srī Charan, benevolently tell me about them."

On hearing the name of Nava Nādhas, I noticed that ambrosial looks emanated from the eyes of Srīvallabha into the external Creation. I saw in His looks the consciousness of love shown by a mother cow on its young calf. He was pleased and said: "My dear ones, *Matschyendra, Gorakshaka, Jālandhara, Gahani, Adbhanga, Chouranga, Bhartarī, Charpata and Nāganādha are Nava Nādhas. A mere remembrance of them will give auspicious results. The grace of Lord Datta would certainly be on those who recollect the names of Nava Nādhas.*

"Some years before the commencement of Kali Yuga[1], Srī Krishna, surrounded by great devotees like Uddhava and all Yadavas, thought about Nava Narayanas who are now called Nava Nādhas. Emperor Rushabha had one hundred sons. Among them, nine who had the Narayana amsa[2] were called Nava Narayanas. Their names are:

1. Kavi
2. Hari
3. Antarikshudu
4. Prabuddhudu
5. Pippalayanudu
6. Āvirhotrudu
7. Drumīludu
8. Chamasudu and
9. Karabhajanudu

1 Dark age
2 Partial aspects of Narayana

"All of them were siddha purushas[1] who were in a state of avadhūtas. As per My command, and to comply with the promise made in the Krishna incarnation, and to conduct the mission of the establishment of dharma, they were born on this Earth as Nava Nādhas. Kavi was born as Matschyendrānath. Hari was born as a disciple of Matschyendranath under the name of Gorakshaka. Antariksha was born as Jālandhara and Prabuddha as his disciple under the name of Kānifa. Pippalayana was born as Charbhata. Āvirhotra was born as Nageswanādha. Drumīla was born under the name Bhartarinādha and Chamasa under the name of Revana Nādha. Karabhajan was born under the name of Gahaninādha.

"At the beginning of the Creation, the semen of Brahma leaked due to some reason. Sage Vyāsa wrote in the Bhavishya Purāna that many sages would be born in many places from that semen.

"There was one Uparichara Vasuvu. He was enamoured of Urvasi. Once, his sperm leaked and fell into the Yamuna River. A fish drank it. From that fish Matschyendranath was born. Shiva burnt Cupid into ashes with the fire from His forehead. In that ash, the soul of Cupid stayed in a subtle form. When a king named Bruhadradha was performing a yagna, Jālandharanath emerged from the fire altar of that sacrifice. From the semen of Brahma that fell into the Reva or Narmada River, Revana Siddha was born. Some sperm of Brahma fell on the hood of a snake. The snake ate it thinking it to be a food item. So, it became pregnant. Janameyjaya was performing sarpa yaga[2]. A sage by the name of Asthika rescued this great serpent from destruction. He hid that serpent nymph Padmini, daughter of Takshaka, in the hole of a big audumbara tree[3]. Āvirhotra had to be born from that embryo embedded in the womb. The daughter of Takshaka kept the embryo in the hollow of the audumbara tree and left for her native place. From that, Āvirhotra was born under the title Vata Siddha Nāganādha. When Matschyendra was wandering in the country, he gave some holy ash charged with mantra to an issueless lady. She had no faith and she threw the ash into the heaps of rubbish and sweepings. Since that holy ash had great power, Gorakshanadh emerged from that. During the marriage of Parvati, Brahma, who officiated as the priest for the ceremony, became distracted on seeing

1 Great saints
2 Snake sacrifice; in the Mahabharata a great ritual to kill all the serpents
3 Very sacred Indian fig tree (Ficus racemosa)

the beauty of Parvati. On account of that, His semen leaked. He was ashamed and He rubbed that semen with the heel of His leg, concealing it from all. That rubbed semen became sixty thousand parts and from that, sixty thousand sages called Vālakhilyas were born. Some part of it that was still left turned into waste and it fell into the river Bhagiradhi. It gradually moved into the grassy shrub in the river bank and was caught there. The soul of Pippalayana entered into it and a Nava Nādha by name Charpatanath was born. A sage by name Kaulika while going from his hut for collecting alms kept the begging bowl outside the hut. At that exact time the sperm of Sun dropped into it. The Maharshi who noticed it preserved it there. Bharthari means begging bowl. So Bhartharinath was called like that because he was born from the begging bowl. In the Himalaya Mountains, in a dense forest, a big elephant was sleeping. On seeing Saraswati, Brahma was smitten with infatuation and as a result His sperm leaked. Providentially, that semen fell into the ear of that elephant. A person called Prabuddha took life from it and as he was born out of the ear of the elephant he became famous under the name Karna Kānifa as one among the Nava Nādhas. Goraksha prepared a clay human image chanting the sanjīvini mantra. From that image, due to the efficacy of the sanjīvini mantra, Karabhajana came to life and was born with the name of Gahaninādha. These Nava Krishnas (Nava Narayanas) preserved their gross bodies (in samadhi) in the Mandhara Mountain and incarnated on the Earth with their potencies as Nava Nādhas and participated in the programme of establishment of dharma."

Then I questioned, "Victory, victory unto the Guru Sārvabhūma[1]. You said that the Nava Nādha incarnations were the quasi-incarnations[2] of the Nava Krishnas. Oh Lord, is there any difference between Nava Krishnas and Nava Nādhas?"

Srīpāda smilingly directed towards us His looks filled with divine love. He proclaimed, "Dear ones, I am the great resolve for all this Creation! The resolves of all the gods and goddesses are only fractions of My great resolve. These fractional intentions will have independence to a limited extent. A cultivator ties a cow to a tree. He ties it with a long rope. The cow can graze only up to the distance allowed by the rope. It means that

1 The Emperor of Gurus
2 Amsa avatars

the cow has a determined limited space in which it can graze. It can graze subjected to those limitations. It implies that it was granted a restricted liberty. It can graze freely in the zone of freedom granted to it. If it has to cross those limits for grazing, it must necessarily have the permission of the farmer. When the fodder at that particular place is exhausted the farmer would tie it to another tree or lengthen the rope if it is retained at the same tree. In the same fashion the quasi-incarnations will be granted independence within the principles of dharma and karma. Therefore, the resolve emanates from the prime nature. The responsibility of implementing it would be entrusted to the part-incarnations. If any problems crop up, these fractioned-incarnations submit those difficulties to the prime phenomenon. They bring the grace from the origin, i.e., the prime phenomenon, and cause welfare to the living beings. As the fractional incarnations of the main nature do not have bad qualities like lust, hate, arrogance etc., they are capable of performing all the activities that the prime nature is capable of. Therefore, as far as living beings are concerned, there is no difference between the incarnations, be it a complete incarnation or a quasi-incarnation.

Explanation about Sai Baba

"I told you previously, that in the future my Samartha Sadguru form by name Sai Baba would be imminent. He will choose Shiladī Nagaram as his place of work and he will protect his devotees. That avatar will not be different from My nature. I will make a decision on how much grace should be given, and how much should not be given. If Sai Baba is disturbed by his devotees' prayers and asks for more grace from Me, I will definitely give. When the nature of the Lord bestows grace on listening to the common man's prayers and anguish, why will it not be granted when Sai Baba asks? So, all devotees who follow Sai Baba will definitely be benefited. It is said 'Sethe Visramyathi Ithi Sai'. The nature of Sai is that one which conciliates the functions of organs. Do realize that the nature of Sai Baba will be in a state of merger within Me."

Then, I asked, "Salutations to Srī Maha Guru. Is Srī Vasavī Kanyaka a complete incarnation or a quasi-incarnation?"

Srīpada said, "In accordance with the promise made by Ārya Mahadevi, she was born as the daughter of Kusuma Sresthi. If Kanyaka had not incarnated, then the Vaishya caste would have had many mishaps. A Vaishya by name Samadhi noticed this danger in an unexpressed state, in the form of a seed. He noticed that from that unexpressed state it would change to the expressed state, sprout and then become a big tree, and that the Vaishya caste would be wedged in danger. If Ambika had not emerged as Vasavī, then the cruel kings like Vishnu Vardhana would marry beautiful girls of ordinary kings like Kusuma Sresthi or his relatives and take pleasure from them as their mistresses and make everyone descend in dharma. In order to evade such happenings to any girl of the ordinary kings and to protect their chastity, self-respect and liking towards their caste, Vasavī entered the fire along with the couples from different gotras. Liking towards caste and self-respect should be inducted into the fire. Else, the Vaishyas having dignity and pride should be burnt. In this critical test of fire, with the grace of Srī Vasavī, Vaishyas became victorious. In return to that sacrifice, people who were in their gotras were granted wealth and health having no dearth of food and clothing. Srī Vasavī Kanyaka is only one beaming ray of Ārya Mahadevi. The Earth cannot withstand that ray of the endless power. Srī Vasavī came as a quasi-avatar for a specific purpose. All through Her eighteen years of life span, She burnt the ill fate of their caste people in yogagni[1]. The unendurable ill fate is loss of chastity. Recognize that the most ill fate for a woman is loss of chastity rather than wealth or prosperity. When such threat came Her way, she attracted such fate of all the people of her gotras towards Her. She established a divine truth in the nature by burning Herself in the fire along with the couples from 102 gotras. When She bestowed Her real form of Ārya Maha Devi, everybody including Kusuma Sresthi were frightened. My dear, only three can see the true form of chaste women. They give dārshan with all their ornaments and mangala sutram[2]:

- While giving dārshan to mahatmas in a higher state than them.
- While giving dārshan to their husbands who married them with fire being the witness.
- While gracing their true devotees who are at a lower state than them.

1 Yogic fire
2 The cord as token of marriage, fastened on the neck of the bride

"Vishnu Vardhana fell in love with his goddess of death but not Vasavī. The goddess of death prayed Vasavī, 'Oh Mother, please let me take your form'. Ambika agreed. Then, another form of Vasavī emerged out, which resembled Vasavī's form. That form merged into the goddess of death. The goddess of death merged into Vishnu Vardhana and wrecked his head into thousand pieces and came out. This was the real incident that took place on that day."

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Chapter 33

Srīpāda Personally Performed the Wedding of Ramani and Narasimha Rayudu

We took the permission of Srīpāda. Srīpāda instructed us, "My dear children! You go from here to Srī Pīthikapuram. My auspicious blessing will be with you as an accompanying protection." In compliance with the command of Srī Maha Guru, Srī Dharma Gupta and I reached the bank of the Krishna River on the other side. We saw the footprints of Srī Charan on a rock. Srīpāda used to stand on this rock and offer surya namaskar[1]. We were surprised and felt happy to see the footprints of Srī Charan on that rock.

We reached Panchadeva Pahād village. We were following a footpath formed in a jowar[2] field. The owner of that field cordially invited us. He offered us sweet fruits to eat and gave sweet buttermilk to drink. The name of that cultivator was Narasimha Rayudu. He built a house in his field. He requested us to rest in his house and accept his hospitality. We agreed.

He described the glory of the sportive plays of Srī Charan. He narrated, "Sir, my name is Narasimha Rayudu. I was very weak and timid in my childhood. I lost my parents during my childhood. I was brought up in my maternal uncle's house. My aunt was very quarrelsome. I had to do lot of manual labour in their house. There was much work in the farm. My uncle had a daughter named Ramani. She was very beautiful compared to all the girls in the houses of our relatives in that town. Besides that, she possessed all good qualities. She had devotion to God. She used to worship Srī Krishna as her chosen deity. She could not tolerate when my aunt was providing me stale food. For me, food was too little and courteous treatment was nil. Work was always a hassle. Ramani used to offer me sweet fruits and warm food without being seen by her mother. If my aunt were to see it, Ramani and I were getting blows and rebukes from my aunt. Even though my uncle was good, he was incapable and he could never protest

1 Obeisance to the Lord of the Sun
2 Sorghum bicolour; a grass species cultivated for its grain

his wife. Sometimes my maternal aunt used to get me beaten by strong young men belonging to other families of the kāpu caste. I was weak initially. But by these blows I became much weaker. I was also very timid. Therefore, the neighbours also used to consider me as an incapable fellow. I became subordinate even to those who were younger to me.

"As Ramani was very beautiful, the kāpu youths in my town had an intense desire to marry her. I did not have any property or cash. My body was very weak. Above all, I was timid. My uncle was wealthy and had property. Though good natured, he was greedy. My maternal aunt, though a shrew, had the nature of getting deceived by flatterers.

"Ramani used to pray to Lord Srī Krishna that I should be her husband under any circumstances. In the meanwhile, a fraudulent sanyasi[1] came to our town. A powerful propaganda was carried on, that he worships Mother Kāli and that he could tell the past, present and future. In fact, he had some powers. His forecasts to the citizens were proving to be one hundred percent true. He brought our aunt under his undue influence through his deceitful words. Arrangements were made for him to conduct a worship of Kāli in our house. He said that the clay idol of Krishna worshipped by Ramani daily should be thrown out of the house. My maternal aunt agreed. Ramani wept bitterly, but in vain. The fake sanyasi began the worship. Many fowls were sacrificed. The room of worship was all drenched with blood and presented a horrible appearance. Some human skulls and some more strange articles that are typically used for the worship at burial ground were kept in the house. He made all the inmates believe that after the conclusion of the worship, rich hidden treasures would be uncovered and with them the whole family would become rich. The fraudulent sanyasi also knew the art of inveigling by charms. He hatched a plot to rob the chastity of Ramani with that art.

"Due to the weird methods of worship performed by him, the health of Ramani deteriorated. She started behaving in a queer way. She was not her former self. She used to drink blood of night. She was only drinking blood instead of food. The fake sanyasi was convincingly telling them that Mother Kāli entered into her and for that reason she was drinking blood, and that she would become a normal person on the exit of Mother Kāli;

1 Religious mendicant

and unless blood oblation was offered, Kāli would not be pacified and the hidden treasures would not be available. In this way, everything was very horrid. The food receptacles were suddenly falling into the well. Human skeletons were seen in the house here and there. At midnight, strange figures appeared making horrific sounds. All our house looked like a burial ground. Our maternal uncle was not bold enough to ask the fraudulent ascetic to leave the house. Our maternal aunt was hoping to get hidden treasures if the troubles were endured for few days. The whole situation was very confusing and perplexing.

"During one night, the fake sanyasi approached Ramani. He felt that his desire would be satisfied as she yielded to the influence of his magical charm. When he came near her, Ramani cried aloud and in a frightening manner hit his head with an iron article. She did not know why she acted like that. The fraudulent ascetic also did not understand why the person under his control behaved so suddenly in such a fashion.

Srīpāda's response to distress call

"After the daybreak, a poor Brahmin beggar came to our house. Ramani came out of the house and told him that there were a large number of ghosts, spirits, and devils and that he may receive them as alms, if he was so willing. The Brahmin agreed to that.

"His bloomy face was placid and brilliant. In the meantime, our maternal uncle came out. 'Sir, in our house the situation is completely upset. If you want, you can receive those evil forces creating those circumstances, as a gift.' My maternal aunt also joined then. She said, 'There is nothing in our house. If you want, you can accept the poverty in our house.' I was also present in the house. I said, 'Swamī, there is a silver talisman with me coming from the time of my forefathers. If you are willing, you can accept it.' He agreed and I gave the silver talisman as bhiksha[1]. In the meanwhile, the bogus ascetic brought some human skulls from the burial ground. He jeeringly said, 'You, poor Brahmin! If you want, you can take these human skulls as bhiksha.' He accepted.

1 Donation of food or money

"Suddenly a divine radiance appeared in our house. The Brahmin visitor disappeared. Due to the divine radiance, the fraudulent ascetic experienced a burning sensation all over the body. A ray from that radiance entered into Ramani. She became healthy. My maternal aunt had an attack of paralysis and she lost her speech. My maternal uncle developed violent shivering. I received extreme courage. I felt as if some new strength entered into my body and I felt that I was very strong. Blood streamed out of the mouth of the magician and all his faculties were lost. The divine radiance wore a human form. That divine glorious form belonged to the refuge of all the distressed, the embodiment of all gods and goddesses, the one without beginning, middle or end — Srīpāda Srīvallabha.

"Srī Charan said, 'In reality Mother Kāli destroys the demoniacal forces like lust, anger, etc. hidden in the seeker, but she does not want fowls, goats and others. Demoniacal forces of the world of life force[1] assume the form of Kālika[2] and demand various types of sacrifices. The real Mother Kālika possesses auspicious qualities like love, peace and compassion. Devilish forces; ghosts, spirits etc., and demoniacal forces in the world of life force style themselves as particular deities and exhibit evil arts. Evil magicians worship them and cause untold harm to the world. Note that the manes of ghosts in the world of vital force also have the capacity to assume the forms of deities, but the divine powers will not exist in such forms.

"An assurance was given that I will incarnate whenever dharma touches the bottom-most level; this incarnation of Srīpāda Srīvallabha came in consonance with that assurance. This incarnation is invested with infinite properties like love, peace, mercy and compassion.'

"Our house was completely cleansed. The bogus sanyasi was driven out. With the grace of Srī Charan, the paralysis of our maternal aunt abated. Srīpāda personally blessed with His own hands and conducted my marriage with Ramani. Then His age actually was twelve years only. He was in Pīthikapuram at that time. He was in this Panchadeva Pahād with His subtle sportive body. These were the blessed turmeric powder mixed rice grains[3] He granted us that day. He instructed us that Dharma Gupta and Shankar Bhatt would visit this place in the future and some of this blessed

1 Prānamaya jagat
2 The goddess Kāli
3 Akshimatalu

turmeric powder mixed rice should be given to them. Oh, what a great sportive playful incarnation!"

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 34

The Story of Sarabheswara

Srī Dharma Gupta and I travelled for some days and reached another village. Srī Dharma Gupta and I were reciting the name of Srīpāda and recollecting His boundless mercy and compassion while carrying on with our journey. Someone or the other was giving us hospitality on the way. We continued the journey in some places on a cart drawn by two bullocks. In some places, we travelled on a horse drawn carriage. In some other places, we simply travelled on foot. We considered it as a sportive grace of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, who was indirectly looking after us, in whatever way we travelled, or in what manner we received the hospitality from someone or the other.

There was a special incident in one village when we reached there. All the articles in the house of a Brahmin in that village were being thrown out into the street. His wife and children were standing outside the house. The Brahmin took a loan from a money lender. He could not repay the loan. One day, that lender accosted the Brahmin while he was walking and asked him to stop. The Brahmin stopped. The lender drew a circle with a charcoal around the Brahmin and asked the Brahmin to not move out of the circle. The lender demanded that the Brahmin should declare when he would repay the loan. The Brahmin replied that he would repay in two fortnights. However, he could not keep up his word because he could not get the money to repay the loan. The lender had already told the Brahmin strictly that he would occupy the house after the time limit if the loan was not repaid. The lender was troubling the Brahmin in this way. The Brahmin, his wife and children were in a helpless circumstance. All the villagers were watching this peculiarity as if it were a fun event, but none of them dared to convince the lender to give some more time for the repayment.

Srīpāda places devotees in critical situations, tests their devotion and rescues them

Srī Dharma Gupta was moved on seeing the miserable state of the Brahmin. He wanted to help, but he did not have any money at that time. I had no money. However, I ventured and said, "Sir! Take pity on this helpless Brahmin and grant him an extension of time for two more fortnights. In the meantime, the Brahmin will come out of his difficulties on account of the mercy of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. Think a bit calmly. I will guarantee the repayment of the loan by him." I spoke these words involuntarily. The lender spoke, "Ok, I will believe you. I am giving an extension of time for two fortnights to repay the loan, but you two travellers should not leave from here until the loan is completely repaid. In case the debt is not redeemed, I will not only seize the house of this Brahmin but will also take you both to the village bench for making me grant an extension of time unnecessarily. Then you both will be liable for the punishment imposed by the justice there."

I was worried about the promise I made. It was improbable either for me or Srī Dharma Gupta to repay the loan of the Brahmin before the deadline. I made this promise like a fool without thinking about the possibility or propriety of it. I must blame myself for this sort of thoughtless promise. It is not proper to blame Srī Srīvallabha for such matters. I threw Srī Dharma Gupta also into a difficult situation along with me. This would be another sin. This example is enough to illustrate how troubles will arise if there is no control over speech. Where is the end for the sportive pastimes of the Lord? Only when such situations arise, either strong devotion will develop or the devotion will disappear. Srī Dharma Gupta was unworried. He said, "Shankar Bhatt, don't grieve over what happened. What happened, what is happening and what will happen is all His playful pastime. The writing of Brahma is bound to happen."

There were no provisions in the house of the Brahmin to eat meals. He had no money. He and his family members were going to starve without meals anyway. Now, we two were added as their guests. By the grace of Srīpāda we got shelter. We thought that was enough. *I felt that Srīpāda Vallabha is the sole refuge in times of hunger and total exhaustion; in times of troubles from lenders; when caught between the horns of a di-*

lemma not knowing what to do or what not to do; and in critical circumstances. We finished our baths and ablutions for the day. We started reciting the name of Srīpāda Srīvallabha since there was no other way, except for the recollection of His name in this situation. There was no oil, wicks or other material that were needed for the worship of the Lord with lights in the house of that poor Brahmin. Whenever we chanted the incantation "Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye[1]", all the inmates of the house were repeating it. The children and old ladies who were neighbours on the street also gathered there. They were also chanting the name of Srīpāda with devotion.

In the meanwhile, some farmers also came to the house of the Brahmin. Word spread in the village that I stood as a guarantor for the repayment of the loan by the Brahmin and that I was a disciple of a great person and, therefore, I was prepared to redeem the debt of the Brahmin through my divine power. Information was also circulated that I would not have given such a strong guarantee if I did not have some divine powers, and also that I was a great astrologer. The farmers of the village were fond of betting. Some of them put bets that the Brahmin would repay the loan while some others put bets that he could not repay. Oh, what a bad destiny! I thought to myself that from a comfortable position, I brought upon myself needless distress. By making an impossible promise randomly, I was stuck into this crisis. I thought that I would be dragged before the village court if I could not repay the loan of the Brahmin. Srī Dharma Gupta, also along with me, would land into trouble. In addition to this, some people also placed bets based on my hollow promise. At the very least, my ineffective promise had become a cause for the betting of gamblers. I believed that the only refuge was the divine auspicious feet of Srīpāda, the divine entertainer who rejoices every moment with his sportive plays. The words "*satyam vidhatum nija bhrutya bhashitam*", which Sage Narada said with Maha Vishnu, came to my memory. I felt that Lord Narayana would observe the words of His servants and that He would take responsibility for making them as truthful words.

In the village, there lived a scholar by the name Sarabheswara Sastry. He was an expert in mantra sāstra[2]. He was accurately telling about the

1 May Lord Srīpāda protect us.
2 The science of mantras

past, present and future with the help of some ghost. Some bidders approached Sarabheswara and submitted the matter. He sought refuge of the ghost and it said that the Brahmin would not repay the debt. With that information, the pace of the wagers increased. The farmers of the village who were gamblers started to bid hundreds of varahās[1]. They were very enthusiastic in betting because this episode would determine who was great: Sarabheswara Sastry or Shankar Bhatt.

I thought to myself, "Lord Srīpadā! You have placed me amidst the gamblers. You prepared me to be dragged to the village court. You wanted to subject that poor Brahmin to difficulties after giving hope to him. You are also putting into trouble Srī Dharma Gupta, who is a genuine disciple. I am unable to comprehend the inner meaning of this divine play. I only have a nominal education and I do not possess any spiritual strength. I do not know great arts like astrology. I do not observe japa[2] and tapa, yogic exercises, strict principles and devotion. I intended to write the divine hagiography of Srīpāda out of curiosity, but I do not have any qualification needed for that." I prayed that it is His will as to how He would rescue and uplift me. It is a proverb that a stubborn person is stronger than a king. Courage, which was hitherto not in me, began to sprout in me. I firmly believed that whatever has to happen will happen and that Srīpāda would save me through some means.

Sarabheswara Sastry had a sister. She also lived in the same village. One day, she had a dream in the early hours of that day. The gist of the dream was that she had high fever, that her husband died and that she became a widow. She inquired from her brother Sarabheswara Sastry about the outcome of that dream. Sarabheswara questioned the ghost worshipped by him about the matter. Then the ghost said that her husband, who was in another country, was attacked by the robbers on his way home and that they killed him after robbing the money.

On hearing this, Sarabheswara Sastry's sister wept bitterly. In the meantime, some people who were betting on the outcome of the loan repayment came to the house of Sarabheswara Sastry. They informed that a great person by the name of Shankar Bhatt was staying in that village at that time; that he was capable of doing and undoing things; that he was

1 Currency that was in use during the olden times in India
2 Repetition of the name of God

adoring a great deity called Srīpāda Srīvallabha; and that a real explanation of the dream could be obtained from him. She had not heard of any other pandit who was greater than her brother till then. She heard for the first time about a pandit greater than her brother and wanted to submit her trouble to that great personage and obtain his blessings.

She was brought to the house where we were staying. She prayed to me in a pathetic way, "Brother, please save my māngalya[1]!" Some charmed turmeric rice grains, which were given by Srīpāda to the farmer during his marriage at the Panchadeva Pahād, were still with me. I had some sort of divine inspiration. It struck me that because the charmed turmeric rice grains were given by Srīpāda Himself, the māngalya of the lady would be protected if I gave those charmed turmeric rice grains to her. I said to her, "Mother, take these mantrākshatas[2]. These are golden rice grains of turmeric. Preserve them in your pūja-room. Your husband will join you in a few days. This is true."

This news was conveyed to Sarabheswara Sastry by the farmers who were betting on the outcome of the loan repayment. He became enraged. His sister announced that if her husband returned alive to her house she would not only repay the loan amount of the poor Brahmin but also accept Shankar Bhatt as her preceptor and would worship Srīpāda Srīvallabha.

Three days passed. In these three days, farmers were bringing food to the house of the poor Brahmin where I was residing. They laid wagers in my favour. If I succeeded, they would also win and will gain a lot of money in that wager.

After three days, on the fourth day, the brother-in-law of Sarabheswara Sastry returned safely from the distant lands. The joy of Sarabheswara Sastry's sister knew no bounds. She thought that her auspicious married life[3] was retained on account of the mantrākshatas given by me. When some robbers were about to kill her husband during his journey, a Muslim wrestler killed the robbers and rescued her husband.

Oh, the greatness of Srīpāda is boundless! The arrogance of Sarabheswara Sastry was destroyed. As my prophecy came true, Sarabheswara Sastry repaid the loan of the poor Brahmin where we were staying. Sarabheswara

1 The life of her husband
2 Rice mixed with turmeric and charged with incantations
3 Sowbhāgya

Sastry requested Srī Dharma Gupta and me to accept hospitality in their house. We agreed.

Sarabheswara remarked, "Sir, I worship Dhūmravati Devi, one of the dasa maha vidyas[1]. According to the tantra books, she is actually Ugra Tāra. If she is happy, she will destroy all diseases and sorrows. If she is angry, she will destroy all comforts and pleasures. When surrendered to her, all calamities will be destroyed and all riches will be gained. If she is angered, hunger and thirst, quarrels and all kinds of poverty will result. I obtained the grace of that great Mother. The great Mother wards off all ill effects of exorcism and deadly exercises of killing. Her devoted worship is unavoidable for all people suffering from witchcraft and who want protection. Initially, I worked for the good of the people without any greed for money. Afterwards, I became avaricious of money and demanded much money from those suffering from the afflictions of uchhatana[2] and mārana[3] exercises. This was not acceptable to the great Mother.

"In the meantime, I got a connection in the world of vital force[4] with a very strong spirit of a dead person. With the assistance of that spirit of the dead person, I derived an unusual power of telling about the past, the present and the future. These manes will ultimately turn those who worship them into miserable ones. One should not worship them. In case they are worshipped, the money earned through those powers should be utilized for the use of the public and it should be donated to the distressed people who are in want of money. By doing that, the spirit of the dead one will constantly be in our control. If it is not done like that and money is earned selfishly, then those spirits will give some wrong prediction and will subject the worshipper to shame and turn him into a pauper. Not only that, but sometimes even death may take place. The mass of merit in us will be depleted due to selfishness. Then the spirit of that dead person will expose us to eight varieties of difficulties[5].

"I was unwise, not being judicious of the money being earned and lived as a selfish person. Therefore, the spirit of the dead escaped from my

1 Ten different forms of the divine feminine; ten goddesses of wisdom
2 Eradication, driving away
3 Causing death
4 Prānamaya Jagat
5 Ashta Kashtās

control. It gave a wrong prophecy and brought embarrassment to me. I faced ignominy. You are my guru from today on. Please accept me as your disciple." I said, "Sir, there is no other guru for this world or Creation except Srīpāda Srīvallabha. If I arrogate myself as a guru, then I will have to experience more insults than what you experienced thus far. When we were coming from Kurungadda, Srīpāda told briefly about the dasa maha vidyas. He added that remaining details will be taught at the appropriate time and up to the appropriate extent. I learnt from you about Kāli and Dhūmravati of the dasa maha vidyas. Sir, kindly do not take me as your guru. I was stuck here under some peculiar circumstances. Now, I came out of those circumstances. *Srīpāda is an adept in creating difficult problems. He is very dexterous in pulling His devotees out from such difficult problems. Constant remembrance of the name of Srīpāda is the only means to achieve in this world and in the other worlds.*"

***Victory unto** Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!*

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 35

Explanation about Ugra Tāradevi

Srīpāda punishes and saves a follower of Tāradevi

We took leave from Sarabheswara Sastry and continued our journey. We thought that remembering the name of Srīpāda Srīvallabha was the only means of attaining in this world as well as in other worlds. After we travelled for some distance, we saw a hermitage. A sage by the name Siddha lived in that hermitage. He was completely detached from the material things. He was wearing only a modest piece of garment. Two of his disciples, who stood at the entrance of the ashram, questioned whether we were Shankar Bhatt and Dharma Gupta. We replied in the affirmative. We were taken inside the ashram. The image of Tāradevi was inside the ashram. It was understood that Siddha was a worshipper of Tāradevi.

Siddha said, "My children, Srīpāda informed us about your arrival. Hospitality is being offered to you according to the instructions of the great guru. I am a devotee of Tāradevi. Since she always grants *moksha*[1] her devotees, that great Mother is called Tāra. She effortlessly grants the power of speech and saves her devotees from horrible accidents. Therefore, she is also named Nīla Saraswati. There are three Hayagrīvas[2]. One of them is an incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Another one is a sage and the third one a demon. To kill that demon Hayagrīva, Tāradevi took to a blue form. By worshipping her, even a common man can become a scholar and can equal Brihaspati[3]. Sage Vasishta was the one who worshipped Tāradevi for the first time in Bharat Varsha[4]. She is called Vasishta Ārādhita Tāradevi[5]. Even though I have been worshipping Tāradevi for many years, I have not

1 Liberation
2 Horse-headed being
3 The Lord of prayer and devotion; the guru of the gods
4 Name of India
5 Tāradevi worshipped by Vasishta

had her *dārshan* on any day. I visited Ugra Tāra Siddha Pītha in a village named Mahishi[1] in the area of Mithila[2]. There, the idols of Tāra, Ekajata[3] and Nīla Saraswati[4] were on the same pedestal. A big idol was in the middle with two small idols on either side of it. It was said by the elders that Sage Vasishta worshipped Tāradevi at this place and obtained the grace of Tāradevi.

"After I had the dārshan of the idol of Mother Ugra Tāra and came out of the temple, I noticed a girl who was very charming and delightful. It was very pleasing to hear the sound of her foot anklets. While the girl was walking, the sound of her anklets was reverberating in my heart. The girl asked me, 'My dear, you are wandering here and there. Perhaps, you are searching for Me in the whole world. Is that true?' I was astonished. Was she Ugra Tāradevi or some mad girl who was speaking like this? Goddess Tāradevi sits on the corpse form of Shiva in a straddling posture. With blue-coloured three eyes, she holds scissors, skull, lotus and sword in her hands. She wears a tiger skin. She is adorned with a garland of human skulls. This is the real form of that goddess who is a dispenser of bliss and salvation. However, I saw a charming girl whose age did not exceed twelve or thirteen years. I was shocked. I could not reply. Suddenly the girl enhanced her effulgence. All the cells in her body became brilliant. Her body took the shape of a boy. The body colour of that boy changed to golden colour. The eyes of the boy were like eyes of a yogi with the divine qualities of tranquility, compassion and mercy. The boy had anklets on His two legs. He asked me, 'Sir, the anklets on my legs are very tight. Can you remove them?' I agreed to it. He said, 'Keep these two anklets with you. The anklets have life force in them. They will decide everything for you — where to go, what to eat and with whom you need to speak.'

"Having said like that, the boy disappeared. I went to Kālighat[5]. After visiting Mother Kāli's idol there, I travelled south. I visited Puri[6], a great

1 A village in the Saharsa district of northern Bihar
2 An area in North Bihar bordering Nepal
3 The Blue Tāra, protector of secret mantras
4 The dark blue Saraswati
5 A place in Kolkata with a famous Kali temple
6 A city in the East Indian state of Odisha

pilgrimage centre. I went further south and reached Simhachala kshetra[1]. Fortunately, I came to Srī Pīthikapuram which is Pādagaya kshetra[2]. I saw Srī Kukkuteswara[3] temple there. I visited the self-manifested Datta idol there. There was a snake pit near the place where the idol of the self-manifested Datta was located. A divine serpent was living in that snake pit. After I saw Datta idol, that divine serpent appeared. At the mere sight of that serpent, the kundalini in me started rising rapidly. My body was not in my control. I roamed here and there like a lunatic. I was reciting the name of Mother Tāra and was shouting. Providentially, I came near the house of a Kshatriya zamindar named Narasimha Varma. The form of the girl who gave me dārshan in Mahishi village appeared to my mental eye. The form of the girl suddenly changed into that of a boy. The same divine lad, who gave me dārshan on that day, was standing in front of me. There was a horse-drawn cart in the house of Srī Varma. It could also be pulled by one person. The divine boy wanted to go to His maternal grandfather's house in that cart. Srī Varma called the servant to pull the cart. The servant came and stood. The divine boy asked the servant also to get into the cart. The boy said to me, 'If you don't pull this cart, I will skin you alive and will get sandals stitched with your skin. I am a cobbler. Removing the skin and stitching shoes with that skin is My family profession. The skin of animals like you is superior to the skin of buffaloes and cows.'

"I agreed to pull the cart under compelling circumstances. The divine boy held a stick, which looked like a stick used for driving cattle, in his hand. I underwent all sorts of troubles to pull that cart. The divine lad severely beat me with the stick in His hand. The weight of the two people was equal to the weight of twenty people. While I was experiencing various kinds of troubles to pull the cart, the boy was increasing my pain by beating me with the stick. With heavy pain and with blood streaming out from me, I somehow took the cart to the house of the boy's maternal grandfather. The servant who came with the boy was very moved on seeing my condition. The boy, however, remained as a cruel one deriving sadistic pleasure from all this. The boy warned the servant that he would

1 Town with a famous temple dedicated to Lord Narasimha, near Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh
2 Pithapuram, as the place where the feet of the asura (demon) Gaya fell
3 Temple in Pithapuram mainly dedicated to Lord Shiva

also be punished if he shows any love towards me. I was half-naked. The boy went inside the house and brought two handfuls of chilly powder. He rubbed the chilly powder on the parts of my body from which blood was flowing out. The two anklets that were given in the Mahishi village were on my waist.

"In the meanwhile, the maternal grandmother of the divine boy, Rajamāmba — a pious woman — came out. She had another name, Punya Rūpini. On seeing her, the burning sensation in my body cooled down. Her husband was the famous Bāpanārya, a Satya Rushīswara[1]. He spoke to me in Hindi, 'Child, what is your village? Wherefrom you have come? You can take some rest and leave after taking meals.' The servant submitted the cruel acts of Srīpāda to His maternal grandmother and grandfather.

"Then Srīpāda said, 'Grandmother, this servant is uttering lies. No blood came out of that person. It was only sweat. I did not rub chilly powder at all. It was sandalwood powder.' The servant was asked to go and verify. Upon inspection, he found that what Srīpāda said was true. Srī Bāpanārya said, 'Srīpadā, You are devoted to truth. If You say that there are blood flow marks, there will be blood flow stains. If You say that there is sandalwood powder, there will be sandalwood powder. Whatever You say, it will be there according to Your word. It appears that You are really a personification of Ugra Tāra. I heard that Ugra Tāra grants efficacy of speech. Verily, You are a personification of Ugra Tāra and You can change the nature and qualities of any of the articles by Your will. Please stop Your playful pastimes and show mercy on this unfortunate one.' Then Srīpāda observed, 'Grandfather, you are speaking the truth. You said that the emergence of will in Me and its fruition will take place almost simultaneously. To decide whether it is a fact or not, the help of scriptures is required. This stranger is a good Brahmin. He worships Ugra Tāra. However, he took to the discipline of asceticism on his own without obtaining the permission of any guru. His father brought him up by undergoing all kinds of difficulties. His mother suffered great pain when he was in her womb. At the time of his birth, his mother lost much of her blood. She experienced excruciating anguish comparable to the burning sensation arising from rubbing chilly powder to wounds oozing with blood.

1 Rishi of truth, the upholder of truth

"The servant in the house of Narasimha Varma was the father of this stranger in his previous birth. The wife of the servant was the mother of this stranger. Not performing proper obsequies for the dead elders will cause ill effects. This stranger did not perform obsequies to his parents because he became a sannyasi. His sinful karma and his good karma dragged him to the Pādagaya kshetra[1], Srī Pīthikapuram. I cancelled those ill effects by making him experience the sinful karma through this small trouble. *A child lies in the womb of his mother for nine months. If one stays in Kashi kshetra*[2] *for nine months, or nine days or even nine ghadiyas*[3]*, the curses from ancestors will be annulled. Srī Pīthikapuram kshetra stands on an equal footing with Kashi.* If this man serves for nine days his parents of the former birth, the curse of the manes would be removed.' I did as He said. I received His grace and blessings. I preserved the anklets given by Him on that day in my pūja-room. I attained perfection in Ugra Tāra mantra. I am remedying chronic diseases with my tantra power.

"Srīpāda appeared before my mental eye and instructed me before your arrival that Shankar Bhatt and Dharma Gupta would be coming this way and that I should give them good food and provide lodging accommodation and that I should present them these anklets." Thus, Siddha narrated.

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

1 Pithapuram, as the place where the feet of the asura (demon) Gaya fell
2 Now Varanasi or Benares; holy Indian city
3 An Indian unit of time equalling to twenty-four minutes

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 36

The Account of Vedānta Sarma

Worship of Mātangi

Srī Dharma Gupta and I took the anklets of Srīpāda, which were presented to us as maha prasad[1], and continued our journey. All through the previous night, the melodious music of His foot anklets was resounding in our hearts. We have learnt that OM can be heard without one's effort in the anāhata centre located in the heart. But the entire previous night, we heard the sound of Srīpāda's anklets in our hearts as a rhythmic music. Power flowed from the anāhata chakra to the other chakras. While it was happening, we felt that some new power was generated in all the nerves in our bodies.

While we were walking, we were hearing the sound of the anklets. Whenever we were stopping, the sound was also stopping. In the meantime, we noticed an ashram in the farm fields. A village was seen by its side. People of outcastes lived on the outskirts of that village. We discussed among ourselves as to how an ashram was located near the village.

As we came closer to the ashram, the sound of the anklets halted. We assumed that we were going to get a profound spiritual experience. At that moment, a sixty-year-old sage with a divine glow came out of the ashram. Afterwards, a thirty-year-old yogini mother came out of the ashram. They cordially took us inside the ashram. The sage began to narrate, "My name is Vedanta Sarma. I was a resident of Pīthikapuram. I am now being called Bangarayya. Her name is Bangaramma. I am a Brahmin by birth. This lady belonged to the cobblers' caste by birth. We have an altar of Mātangi in our house. We are worshipping Mātangi here, who is one of the dasa maha vidyas[2]."

1 A great present given as an offering
2 Ten different forms of the divine feminine; ten goddesses of wisdom

I had horripilation. This person was saying he was a Brahmin and that the woman belonged to the caste of cobblers. How was their marriage approved by the dharmas specified in the scriptures?

We were given fruits and root vegetables. Bangarayya said, "Sir, when Arundhati requested Vasishta to marry her, he imposed a condition that she should not object to whatever he might do with her body. She agreed. 'Rundham' means objection. The sage burnt her seven times and brought her back to life. In spite of it, she never objected. That was why she became 'Arundhati'. After that, he took her as his wife.

"When I was in Pīthikapuram I married thrice. All the three wives later died. I wept at my fate. Srīpāda humorously used to tell, 'Grandpa, I found a grandma for you. If you take her as your wife without marrying her, I will grant you noble birth.'

"Srī Bāpanārya was the chairman of the Brahmin council in Pīthikapuram. Under this council, Brahmins requested that a conference of Vedic scholars be held. It was felt that there was a need for discussing some subtle points regarding dharma and karma and to make decisions accordingly. It was decided to invite scholars from distant places and pandits from Pīthikapuram. I was entrusted with the task of deciding about the persons to be invited.

"Srīpāda had never recited the Vedas after his sacred thread ceremony[1]. In fact, He was not sitting at the feet of His grandfather or father and learning lessons from the Vedas. Nevertheless, if anyone, for purpose of testing Srīpāda, were to ask Him to recite any verse from any chapter of the Vedas, He was at once reciting it. Srīpāda knew all the Vedas that Bāpanārya knew. He knew not only the Vedas but also Vedanta and the secrets of the Vedas also. Therefore, we decided to invite Srīpāda also to the conference.

"The real intention of the Brahmins there was different. Large scale arrangements were being made for the conference. Dharma sāstra[2] were to be thoroughly discussed at the conference. The inner intention of the Brahmins there was to strongly criticize the violation of dharma by Srīpāda, and on that basis ostracize Srī Appalaraja Sarma and Srī Bāpanārya from the Brahmin caste and to send a copy of that resolution to Srī

1 Putting on the thread at the initiation into the Gayatri mantram
2 Scripture dealing with ethical principles and regulations

Sankaracharya and with his approval drive out the two families from Pīthikapuram. I joined them when they informed their intention to me. A strong and a strange desire to become the president of the Brahmin conference shot up in me.

"Srīpāda used to go freely to the house of anyone belonging to any caste. He used to behave very independently. In the same Pīthikapuram, the Bangarayya and Bangaramma couple lived. They had a strong desire to see and speak with Srīpāda.

"All of a sudden, Srīpāda asked for leather sandals. His age at that time was fourteen years. The inmates of His house turned down His request because Brahmins should wear wooden footwear and not leather footwear. This matter reached the cobbler couple through somebody. They thought that they would be blessed by offering leather sandals to Srīpāda. Suddenly, Srīpāda appeared in their house. The measurements of His divine Feet were taken. Bangaramma implored to Srīpāda, 'Great Lord, I want to peel my skin and stitch sandals with it and offer them to you.' Srīpāda smiled and disappeared.

"There was a good cow in our house. It suddenly became ill and died. Bangarayya and Bangaramma couple tanned its skin and made leather sandals for Srīpāda. The meeting of Vedic scholars began in the meanwhile. A discussion started about Srī Ādi Shankara. Srī Ādi Shankara debated with Mandana Mishra in Kashi. Ubhaya Bharatidevi said that the test was not complete unless she was also defeated in the debate. Ubhaya Bharatidevi questioned on the science of sexology. Srī Ādi Shankara's knowledge in that science was nil. So, he asked for six months of time. Srī Ādi Shankara thought of obtaining knowledge of the sexology science without infringing dharma. In the meanwhile, a king died. Srī Ādi Shankara entered the dead body of the king by means of his knowledge on entering the body of another person[1].

"He instructed his disciples to safeguard his physical body carefully and in case of emergency to come over to the king's palace and intimate the matter in a code language. The queen noticed the new change in the king. She understood that the soul of a great person entered the body of her husband and attracted her husband's prānamaya jagat[2] back into the

1 Here: Parakāya Pravesa Vidya
2 Consciousness in the world of vital force

dead body. While her husband was enjoying the conjugal pleasure, that great person's soul was getting the knowledge of the experience, remaining as a witness in the body. She also learnt that her husband's prāna-maya consciousness would remain in the body only as long as the great person's soul stayed in her husband's body. So, she ordered the royal staff to find out if any dead body was lying in the town without being burnt and to burn it immediately. While the body of Srī Ādi Shankara was being burnt, his disciples conveyed the matter in code language to Srī Ādi Shankara, living in the guise of the king. Srī Ādi Shankara regained his burnt feet and hands by the grace of Srī Lakshmi Narasimha.

Srīpāda's wonderful talk in the conference of Brahmins

"Then Srīpāda questioned the conference, 'You are saying that a soul remains in one body at a time and enters another body after leaving that body. Then I am asking you a question. Can the soul dwell in three or four bodies at the same time and neutralize the results of karma of three or four births?' For that the council replied that it was a complicated matter and there were no evidences to indicate that it happened like that at any time in the past.

"Srīpāda responded by saying, 'Why there were no such instances in the past? You do not know that such things exist. It was mentioned that due to a curse, Devendra[1] was born as five Pāndavas[2] and Sachidevi[3] was born as Draupadi and became their wife. Even when Sachidevi and Purandara[4] were born on Earth, their original nature remained in heaven. Only Arjuna had the comfort of bed with Draupadi. She used to discuss political matters with Dharmaraja[5]. Like a mother, she was preparing delicious food items and serving them to Bhīma. She afforded sexual pleasure to Arjuna. She appeared in the form of Lakshmi to Nakula. Since Sahadeva knew about the past, present and future, he

1 A name of Indra
2 Yudhishthira, Bhīma, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva
3 Consort of Indra, also called Indrani
4 A name of Indra
5 The king of righteousness; a name of Yudhishthira

wished that events should take place quickly and the Kurukshetra battle should conclude soon. So, she was conducting with him with more patience than Mother Earth. The dharmas of gods and the dharmas of humans are different. The dharmas of animals are different. They should not be mixed.'

"I said, 'In Puranic times, many strange things might have happened. In present times such things are not occurring.' Then Srīpāda's keen looks fell on me and He addressed me, 'You married three women. The three died. Were the three having three souls? Or was there a single soul? If the marriage of three women by a man is sanctioned by dharma, is not the marriage of three men with a single woman sanctioned by dharma? What is ātma[1]? What is marital dharma?' To that question I emphatically stated that a man can marry any number of women, but a woman had no such right.

"Srīpāda commented, 'Oh, are you greater than the Master of the universe? Mandodari[2] was a great pativrata[3]. When she was the wife of Vāli[4], the atoms of her body were different. When she was the wife of Rāvana, the atoms of her body were different. The atoms of her body were different when she was the wife of Vibhishana[5]. *Ātma* is devoid of passions. It has no attachment with anything. It is eternal, pure and extremely sacred. When she was the wife of Vāli, who had the main quality of tamas[6], she discharged her responsibility to suit it. When she was the wife of Rāvana, who was chiefly a person of rajas[7], she conducted herself in tune with it. When she was the wife of Vibhishana, with sattwa[8] as the chief quality, she met her responsibilities as such.'

"I could not reply. After some thought, I said, 'Srīpadā, if we agree to what you are saying, then we must also accept women having multiple hus-

1 The self, the soul
2 Wife of the demon king Ravana; despite her husband's faults, she loves him and advises him to follow the path of righteousness
3 Chaste, virtuous and pious wife
4 Name of a monkey king in the epos Ramayana
5 Brother of the demon Ravana; became a devotee of Rama
6 Inertia
7 Dynamism
8 Poise

bands.' Then Srīpāda remarked, 'This is Kali Yuga[1]. Many subordinate races are coming up. Animals, birds, trees and vermin also are taking human birth. They are having varied relationships matching to their respective natures. When relationships contrary to dharma are formed, mixed castes arise. They are bound to be destroyed at the end of Kali Yuga. Devilish forces are responsible for the origin of unforeseen mixed species or castes. Therefore, the devilish forces are to be destroyed. Once a demon is destroyed, he will not take rebirth, but ten demons are being born in the place of one demon. Only dharmic relationships withstand. Therefore, all people should compulsorily observe the duties of family and lineages and caste[2].

"Some divine souls also emerge from time to time. They have only one soul. If that soul emerges with a male form, that soul's power[3] also emerges with a female form. Their relationship is called the divine marriage. Such divine souls were present even from the beginning of Creation. They will be there at the end of Creation also. They remain in an intimate union of an undivided form of Parashakti and Parabrahma.

"You were born as Vedanta Sarma, a Brahmin, and as Bangarayya, a cobbler, at the same time. Your shakti was born as your three wives, as the cow that died recently in your house, and as Bangaramma, the wife of the cobbler Bangarayya. The consciousness of your deceased wives and the consciousness of the deceased cow have merged with the consciousness of the Pariah woman Bangaramma. The consciousness should revert and merge with the origin of the consciousness from where it emanated. The mystery of Creation is very impervious. Even the power of the Seven Rishis is not enough to comprehend it. As Bangaramma's body has been surrendered to Bangarayya, you can carry on the married life with her without violating the dharma. You should not derive any kind of bodily comfort from her. Being the seat of dharma, I have taken this decision. When we enter nature, we should follow the principles and traditions of nature conscientiously. Bangaramma said that she would present Me sandals stitched out of her skin. I accepted her promise. When she was existing as Bangaramma, without her knowledge, she was also born as a cow.

1 Dark age
2 Varnāshrama Dharmas
3 Here: shakti

Without being aware, she also was born as your three wives. When the consciousness is distributed into three or four bodies, each part in a particular body thinks that it is the only one. It cannot recognize the unity of all the parts.[1]

"The verse 'Kāle pancha sahasrāni jayate varna sankare' has the above-mentioned meaning. It does not speak of the adulteration of the castes. It only speaks of the mixture of races. When castes are adulterated, it leads to low births. With the mixture of races, a new race is born with new strengths. This new race attains divinity through the evolutionary process of the mankind. A divine race will be born on this Earth.

"I am aware of the real motive of this Brahmin council. The evil intention of banishing My father and grandfather from the Brahmin caste is hidden in your innermost recesses. Therefore, I am ostracizing you, Vedanta Sarma, from the Brahmin caste. From today, you will be named as Bangarayya', Srīpāda commanded.

"The entire council was astounded. While everyone was looking, a light came and merged in me. Then again Srīpāda spoke sternly, 'Before your very eyes, the consciousness of Bangarayya came and merged in Vedanta Sarma. You now decide whether he is a Brahmin or a Pariah. You wanted us to expel from the caste and get approbation of Srī Ādi Sankaracharya. What can Srī Ādi Sankaracharya do to Me? I was born before your eyes and grew. Without studying Vedas at all from My grandfather or My father, I am reciting Vedic verses. I am giving dārshan in many places at the same time. Why should I fear even if I face Srī Ādi Sankaracharya? I will give him dārshan as Srī Sarada Chandra Moulīswara[2], who is worshipped daily by him and will grant him My grace. Then he will have to compulsorily agree that I am God. Then his decision will become much more painful to you. The councils of Kshatriyas and Vaishyas will not bow down to your decisions. If they stop supporting priestly activities and rituals and if they stop

1 *Editor's Note:* In the Scriptures, there is the understanding that there is a mutable part and an immutable part of the soul and the divine origin. The mutable part can take to several incarnations, like the Brahmin, the cobbler, the wives. The cow is the beastly part of the personality. It is a common experience that we meet people and feel very intimate with them. For no known reason, there is a great attraction or repulsion; they relate to the mutable part of the soul and can only be understood by considering strong past associations.

2 A lingam received by Srī Sankaracharya from Lord Shiva

giving monetary gifts, then you will have to starve along with your children. If you wish to quarrel with Me, then you will be ruined in all possible ways. I am telling that the duties of the four stages of life[1] are to be followed. People of all eighteen species should live with comfort and happiness. Discharge your righteous duties effectively and participate in the establishment of dharma. If not, you will undergo many troubles and losses. I will remain perfectly tranquil, but you will fall into chaotic situations. During the development of nature, there are only two methods. One is the correcting method and the other is the method of being corrected. Plenty of time will be given for the second method — i.e., for being corrected. If you are not ready for being corrected, you will only invite destruction. I will establish dharma even by destroying, if needed.'

"Having no other option, I took Bangaramma with me and while travelling with her from one village to the other, I came to this place. I installed a Mātangi Devi idol in this hermitage and have been living here.

"Srīpāda, while travelling on this way to Kurungadda, came to our ashram and blessed us saying, 'After death, you will again be born as a Brahmin because of the bonds of indebtedness. Bangaramma will be born as a Shūdra because of the bonds of indebtedness. Then both of you will get married. You will have children. Your progeny will have the fortune of worshipping Me. May you be blessed with comfort!'

"Sirs, this is our story." He explained the matters of their connection with Srīpāda and said, "Srīpāda instructed us that you would be travelling in this area, and that His anklets are with you, and that we should give the leather sandals to you in exchange for the anklets.

"We worship Mātangi Devi, who is the daughter of Sage Mātanga. By worshipping her, abundant marital bliss can be gained. She is called Rāja Mātangi, Karna Mātangi and with varieties of other names. Once Srīpāda appeared physically in our ashram. At that time, Bangaramma was heating milk.

"We had the dārshan that the cow, which was the origin of the leather sandals, passed in front of us while moving its head. Srīpāda received the milk from us. *He graciously declared that the idol of Mātangi Devi, worshipped by us, would reach many fathoms deep below the audumbara*

1 Four ashramas: student, professional and family life, retired, renunciation

tree in the Maha Samsthan to be established in His name. He added that it will be worshipped by many siddha purushas. He called Bangaramma and said, 'Mother, your husband is a very worthy one. Enjoy all comforts from him in the next birth. I kept a golden tilak[1] ready for you. I got an extremely auspicious mangala sūtra[2] prepared for you. They are preserved in the Hiranya Loka[3]. In the ensuing birth, I will personally bless and perform your marriage with My hands.'

"Sirs, you have heard our story. *You always recite Siddha Mangala Stotra. Therefore, you will certainly receive the grace of great persons. Siddhas, maha siddhas, and maha yogis are all like the hands, feet and other limbs of Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha. Srīpāda carries out His resolve through them.* Once He graced us by granting His dārshan as Raja Mātangi Devi. *The entire Creation and all its secrets are in His hands. You constantly remember Him; meditate upon Him; and worship Him. He is all siddhis. He protects you like your own mother. The love of Srīpāda towards His devotees is superior to the love of ten million mothers.*"

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

1 A mark worn on the forehead
2 A thread that the groom ties around the bride's neck during the marriage
3 Literally: "illumined astral planet"; can be translated as astral plane

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 37

The Description of Chinna Mastha Devi

We took leave of Bangarayya and Bangaramma and continued our journey, taking the leather sandals of Srīpāda given to us by the couple. We passed through a forest area and took rest under a banyan tree. Some groups of yoginis came there. On seeing us, they said, "This is a time of great distress. You are not worthy of coming to this area. We worship Chinna Mastha Devi[1] here. She is of a very secretive nature. The entry of males to this area is forbidden. In addition, this is a divine land. Those who come here will not go out alive." On hearing these words, we felt as if our life forces were gone. Then, a very brilliant yogini mother came there. Her eyes were like burning coals. Groups of yoginis who accompanied her brought a Chinna Mastha Devi idol in a small basket. Then the yogini mother said, "Anyhow, these people came here. Give them sarīs and bodices." Following her instructions, the yoginis gave us sarīs and bodices. They threw our dresses into the fire lit up there.

As soon as we wore sarīs and bodices, changes took place in our bodies. Our masculine features disappeared. Big breasts got formed on us. Even the genital organs of our bodies underwent changes. Our bodies turned into female bodies. Our natures changed into female natures. Our voices also changed to be female voices. The yogini groups gave us new names. They called me Shankaramma and Dharma Gupta Dharmamma. We were given meat to eat and alcohol to drink.

Disciplined worship of Chinna Mastha

We heard about Marla Puli, which moves as a man in the day time and as a tiger during the night, but we did not guess, even in dreams, that wor-

1 Lit. "She whose head is severed", one of the ten Maha Vidyas, goddess of wisdom

ship of deities like these exist, or that yoginis can change males into females by their mere will. Torches were lit. Weird dances causing awe and terror went on. Then the yogini mother said, "Kabandha[1] is the lord of this changing world. This energy is called Chinna Mastha Devi. Growth and decay always continue in this world. When decay decreases, the level of growth increases. Then only Bhuvaneswari Devi[2] is manifested. Contrary to this, when decay increases and the level of growth decreases, Chinna Mastha Devi assumes importance. The form of that great mother is a high secret. Once, the goddess Parvati went to the Mandakini River[3] for a bath, along with her companions. After the bath, she was troubled by hunger. Therefore, she became dark blue. At that time, her companions asked for food. She asked them to wait for a while. After some time, they again asked for meals. She asked them to wait for some more time. This went on for three times. Then that Maha Devi severed her head with her sword. Three jets of blood spurted from her. The companions drank two jets while Devi drank the third one.

"Devoted and disciplined worship of Chinna Mastha during the dead of night will give very good results. She should be worshipped for victory over the enemies, for stopping enemy hordes, for conquering kingdom and for the very difficult achievement of liberation. Directions are her clothes. The 'circle of yoni'[4] is in her navel.

"Two companions having Krishna (tamas) and Rakta (rajas) qualities will be with her always. In the language of yoga, staying alive even after cutting her head is a symbol of staying completely in the inner chamber of oneself. Chinna Mastha is meditated upon in the manipūraka centre — the seat of fire. She is the goddess of worship for Hiranya Kasipa[5]." All this was strange and created fear in us. In the meanwhile, it became midnight. It was very much bustling with musical instruments, dances, songs and orchestra. The yoginis wanted to sacrifice two good ladies. They

1 Lit. "headless torso", a rakshasa (demon); his story appears in Ramayana and Mahabharata
2 Lit. "the Goddess of the entire world"; a name of Durga; the 4th of the ten Maha Vidyas
3 Originates from the Chorabari Glacier near Kedarnath in Uttarakhand, joins Alaknanda River at Rudraprayag
4 Womb, female generative organ
5 Lit. "clothed in gold"; someone who is fond of wealth and sex; an Asura (demon)

thought it would be better to sacrifice us since we were readily available. They tied neem[1] leaves to our necks. Big vermilion marks were put on our foreheads. They beheaded us with very sharp knives. When blood streams were profusely flowing, the yogini groups drank that blood with frenzied tipsiness. Our heads and trunks were thrown away. Even then we felt as if we were alive. The whole body had an excruciating burning sensation. We thought that we became victims of the utmost despicable and cruel sordid craft of these yogini groups.

Then sleep overpowered us. In that dormant state, we saw an effulgence in a hazy form. As the effulgence came near us, it was experienced that the yogini groups faded and melted into the air. Our heads and trunks were once again rejoined.

It was two or three ghadiyas[2] for dawn to break. We woke up from sleep as usual. We had sarīs and bodices. Our female features started disappearing. Masculine features again began to increase in us. In the place of our clothes that were burnt last night, new clothes that would be worn by males were present there. After finishing a bath, we wore the new clothes.

Then another traveller joined us. He said, "Sirs, what all you saw last night was a kind of a yogic activity. This is a very secret yogic application. The female nature in your body has been purified. Both female and male natures will be there in every one. Unless these two natures are purified, the yogic power from the universal consciousness will not flow to us. Once the natures are purified, power will flow from the universal consciousness into your bodies as much as needed. The soul has no distinction of male or female. That is the basis for these two natures and is also beyond both.

"By the mercy of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, you received incomparable grace by the extraordinary yogic exercise of the yogini group. The path of sushumna, which cannot be opened without great difficulty, got opened in you. What more do you require? The reason for your extreme fortune is the fact that the leather sandals of Srīpāda are with you. You got released from the consciousness of the bodies of skin and got connected to the consciousness flow of divinity. The sportive plays of Srīpāda are known only to Him."

1 Azadirachta indica; a fast-growing tree
2 An Indian unit of time equalling to twenty-four minutes

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 38

Explanation of Bagalāmukhi Worship

On the way, during our journey to Pīthikapuram, we came across a sanyasi. He sat at the foot of an audumbara tree. His eyes were lustrous. While we were approaching him, he asked us whether we were Shankar Bhatt and Dharma Gupta. We replied in the affirmative. He asked us to take rest for some time at the foot of that audumbara tree. He asked whether the leather sandals of Srīpāda Srīvallabha were with us. We replied in the affirmative. He further advised that we should give those leather sandals to him in exchange for the gem of the black cobra[1] that he had. We agreed.

I asked him, *"Sir, ever since I had the intention of writing the divine biography of Srīpāda, I have been coming across the devotees of Srīpāda, who have been narrating a particular incident that happened in a particular year of Srīpāda. What might be the reason for this?" The sanyasi said, "Srīpāda is a combined personification of Ādi Bhairavi[2] and Ādi Brahma. He is a kāla bhairava who commands time. He is a personification of time. Kāla purusha[3] is not different from Him. He is the form of maha kāla[4]. He only knows when and what incidents should take place. So, it is impossible for those who are captives of the place and time to figure out the kind of resolve of Srīpāda. Playing with space and time is like a ball game for Him. All living beings, their evolutionary process, the natures of those living beings, their duties, their properties, their results and their influences are under His control. He can turn a person who is proud that he is a great scholar into an ignorant one within a second. He can turn a great ignoramus into a great scholar, well versed in Vedas and Vedāngas. His is a rich yogic incarnation. To be able to recog-*

1 Here: Kāla Nāgu
2 The Fierce One; the female aspect of Kāla Bhairava (a form of Shiva); one of the ten Maha Vidyas
3 The divine Person of Time
4 The great time

nize Him as an incarnated avatar and as verily Lord Datta, huge masses of sins must be burnt down, and heaps of merit must be accrued. This is the general condition. However, if His mercy and benign looks are showered, He would protect devotees ignoring these common conditions. He revels in sportive plays each and every moment.

"For those who study the Charitamrutam of Srīpāda, an evolutionary programme will occur in an orderly way. Therefore, only one or two incidents in a year of His life were informed to you. They were also intimated to you in an orderly manner. All this is an integral part of His divine sport. It is a mistake to think that He incarnated only for the evolution of the globe. Many millions of universes are created, maintained, and destroyed every moment. The entire evolutionary process of all these remain in His hands at all times. In the depth of His divine eyes, millions and millions of universes develop and get destroyed. This is His real nature. The highest nature, which has no form and state of which cannot be known when it is not expressed, has manifested in a human form in Pīthikapuram. This itself is a great miracle. After incarnating, where is the end for His playful pastimes? Even the Vedas remain silent, unable to describe Him. His knowledge is infinite. The knowledge of the Vedas is limited. His power is infinite, grace infinite. He is present in all places and at all times. He is truth unto truth, wisdom unto wisdom, and infinity unto infinity which is much beyond reach.

Worship of Bagalāmukhi

"In fact, I am a resident of Bengal. I am a devotee of Bagalāmukhi. She is one among the ten maha vidyas. Those who want the destruction of enemies at the individual level worship Bagalāmukhi. The power of destruction of Parameswara[1] in its comprehensive form is also Bagalāmukhi. By the worship of Bagalāmukhi, the perfection of speech can be achieved. It means that whosoever leads a righteous life and observes the unity of mind, speech and action, whichever word they speak, will come true. There are three types of speech: para, pasyanti and madhyama.

1 A name of Shiva

"In Satya Yuga, a terrible storm devastating the whole world broke out. Lord Vishnu, seeing the plight of the living beings, became sad. When he undertook penance, Goddess Srī Vidya Maha Devi emerged in the form of Bagalāmukhi. She appeared before Lord Vishnu[1] and pacified the storm, which was causing destruction. Some people consider Her as Vaishnavi Devi[2]. She was born during the midnight hours of Chaturdasi on a Tuesday. She is the personification of the power of immobilization. The solar system is stable only on account of Her. Heaven is also kept in its place in the same way. She can grant comforts of this world as well as the other world. She obstructs any evil forces that attempt to create chaos in the life of the spiritual seeker. Similarly, She immobilizes the blind and dark forces and grants protection to ensure the progress of the aspirant. She is also called Badaba Mukhi, Jātaveda Mukhi, Ulka Mukhi, Jwāla Mukhi and Bruhad Bhanu Mukhi. In fact, Lord Brahma is the foremost one who practised Bagalā Maha Vidya. Lord Brahma saw this Maha Devi in the form of Bāla[3] in Tirumala[4] and adored Her. He worshipped this goddess as Srī Venkateswara with his consort Srī Padmavati and started the Brahmotsava celebrations[5]. Lord Brahma taught this Maha Vidya to Sanaka and other sages. Vishnu is among those who worshipped Bagalāmukhi. Parashurama[6] also worshipped this goddess.

"In my pilgrimages, I came to Pīthikapuram. I visited the Srī Kukkuteswara temple[7]. Then I saw a charming young boy. The boy said to me, 'I know that you have come from Bengal. For a very long time until recently, I was imprisoned in this temple under the name Swayambhū Datta. I was very much suffocated. I felt terribly sultry. So, I requested the priests to render Me services which make Me cool. They refused it. I said that I will go out because there was no other alternative. They said that instead of My going out, they would drive Me out. Therefore, I came out a short while ago.'

1 Here: Srīman Narayana; a name of Lord Vishnu
2 The personified energy (shakti) of Vishnu
3 Lord Venkateswara, a form of Vishnu
4 A hill town in the south of Andhra Pradesh with the famous Lord Venkateswara temple
5 Nine days of celebration in Tirupati; holy cleansing ceremony in honour of Lord Brahma
6 The 6th avatar of Vishnu
7 Temple in Pithapuram mainly dedicated to Lord Shiva

"I understood the inner meaning of His words. I understood that He was verily Lord Datta Himself and that worship and devotional services were not properly offered to Him with due care and diligence. It was also clear that since He did never observe untouchability, and as orthodox Brahmins did not allow untouchables into the temple, He incarnated to personally save miserable, oppressed and distressed ones.

"I requested Him to give me the dārshan in the form of my devotional deity and gratify me. The supreme Lord smiled. I saw the great goddess Srī Bagalā. These physical eyes cannot see such great brilliance. I fainted. Some kind people who were there arranged a carpet beneath a tree and laid me down on it. In reality, I did not faint. He gave an experience of supreme bliss. I enjoyed that divine happiness for eight days. My heartbeat and pulse stopped. People did not understand my situation.

The account of the sanyasi

"My episode created an uproar in Pīthikapuram. Rumour spread that some Brahmin sanyasi entered the Srī Kukkuteswara temple and visited the self-manifested Datta. The rumour mentioned that he was a mean magician who tried to employ the witchcraft on Kukkuteswara and the self-manifested Datta, but on account of the rigorous disciplined conduct and regulations of the priests, the power of Kukkuteswara and the self-existent Datta did not dwindle, and from the negative results that followed, the sanyasi fainted and lied without pulse and heartbeat.

"Rumours generally spread wildly very quickly in Pīthikapuram. People in Pīthikapuram were great experts in commenting truth as untruth and untruth as truth and make others believe them. Srīpāda Srīvallabha, who incarnated amidst them, was much more dexterous than all of them. All the happenings here gave great entertainment for Him. He is the one who rejoices eternally, a divine reveller.

"The importance of priests enhanced in Pīthikapuram. The word travelled that by their discipline and austerity, a black magician fainted and remained like a corpse. It was said that by taking the help of the priests, all afflictions would be removed, and that by performing special pūjas through them, much greater welfare would be accumulated. Pūjas were

commenced by the priests. Liberal monetary gifts were given to the Brahmins. Suddenly, a worry started among the priests. They were worshipping, with great exertion of the idol, the self-manifest Datta and Kukkuteswara. As a result, they were getting various kinds of food donations[1] and generous monetary donations. They were saving this money in the boxes in their houses, but it was disappearing by the morning. Since they agreed to conduct the worships, they had to perform them compulsorily daily, but the money earned was disappearing. Not only that, even though plenty of food donations were given and even though they ate in great quantities, they were feeling weak and exhausted. It was quite strange that they became weak and that their money kept disappearing. If they were to disclose the truth about these happenings, they would have to face embarrassing situations. Since it was widely propagated that the priests were great experts in mantra and tantra sāstras[2], if the fact that they were subjected to the influence of a yakshini[3] were to be known to others, it would damage their honour. Therefore, the Brahmins kept these matters to themselves and did not reveal them to anyone.

"They decided to know whether the fainted sanyasi was alive or dead, and to cremate him if he was dead. They placed this matter before Srī Bāpanārya. Then Srī Bāpanārya examined the body of the sanyasi and announced that the sanyasi neither died nor fainted, but he was in a state of samādhi. Some people thought that if the body of the sanyasi was cremated without caring for the word of Srī Bāpanārya, then the evil effect of yakshini would be eradicated. Some others said that if he were to be cremated, the powers of the sanyasi would violently flourish and would create many more calamities. My body was not cremated only on account of the peculiar resolve of Srīpāda.

"I became normal after eight days. Srīpāda touched my head with His divine auspicious hands. None of the Brahmins gave me alms. Boarding and lodging were provided to me in Srī Pīthikapuram in the house of some shepherds. Since I did not follow caste restrictions, all the shepherds became friends with me. Among those shepherds, there was a woman named

1 Swayampākam; rice, vegetables etc. donated to a Brahmin to cook and eat
2 Practices for experiencing the concrete manifestation of divine energy through rituals
3 A female fiend

Lakshmi. Her husband used to treat her with great love. He was not only the chief of all those shepherds, but was also acting as a judge to settle disputes in that caste. Though young, since he was educated, he used to read property documents, make allotments as written in those documents and used to attend to the drafting of matters relating to the lands. Therefore, his caste people elected him as their chief even though he was young. His wife Lakshmi was a devoted wife. She became a widow four or five years ago. Since I knew the greatness of Srīpāda, I told Lakshmi that she would be benefited if she had some relationship with Srīpāda. In the meanwhile, the cow in the house of Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti stopped giving milk. So, Lakshmi used to bring milk to the house of Srī Sreshti. Srīpāda used to come to the house of Srī Sreshti often. Even before His asking, 'Grandmother! I am hungry', Venkata Subbamāmba used to heat the milk and give it to Srīpāda. In addition, she used to give cream and butter. Whenever Lakshmi brought milk to the house of Srī Sreshti, Srīpāda used to say that He was very hungry. Venkata Subbamāmba asked Lakshmi to bring some more milk. If Lakshmi were to bring some more milk to Srī Sreshti's house, milk in her house would get depleted and she would need to drink watery buttermilk. Even then Lakshmi, who had the spirit of sacrifice, was selling to the house of Srī Sreshti the milk that she kept for drinking and other consumption.

The story of a Purāna pandit

"In the meanwhile, a pandit who was conducting discourses on the Purānas[1] came to the town. The Brahmins in Srī Pīthikapuram said that the Purānas were meant for Shūdras and not for superior Brahmins like them and that they already knew all the Purānas. Srī Bāpanārya, Srī Sreshti and Srī Varma offered to give some money to the pandit. It was agreed that all Shūdras in the town could attend the pandit's discourses on the Purānas[2]. Not only that, it was announced through the beat of the drum that Shūdras could give monetary offerings to the Puranic pandit. Some among the Brahmins suggested that half of the amount given by Shūdras

1 Literary genre; the texts belong to the classical holy scriptures of Smriti
2 Purāna sravana

to the pandit should be credited to the council of Brahmins and the remaining half could be taken by the pandit. For that, Srī Bāpanārya rebuked them by saying, 'This is called 'begging from the begger[1]'. You said that you would not even listen to the Purānas. On the other hand, you are trying to snatch away the hard-earned money of the pandit who is taking the trouble of giving the discourses. If you do not change your behaviour or the way of thinking, you will have to experience severe punishments from the Kāla Purusha[2] in the future.'

"Meals were arranged for the pandit in the house of Srī Bāpanārya. Lakshmi used to give him boiled milk before the commencement of the Purānic discourses. After drinking the milk, he used to start the discourse on the Purānas.

"Srīpāda Srīvallabha resides in the hearts of all; so, there is nothing that is not known to Him. The pandit was a great jnāni[3] and a great yogi. With his yogic power, he found the other forms assumed by his soul. He attracted the consciousness in those forms into himself.

"He then found, his soul was in the form of an infant aged four months in the house of a Brahmin zamindar[4]. While Lakshmi was giving milk to him, he saw her with yogic vision and came to know that his soul will be the husband of Lakshmi in her next birth. It meant that the above infant form will be the husband of Lakshmi in her next birth.

"All the masculine forms of his soul[5] were already merged in the pandit, who was their essential basic nature. When he searched with his yogic insight for his feminine[6] forms, he understood that Lakshmi was the essential basic nature of all his feminine forms. He also noticed that all his feminine natures were already merged in Lakshmi. He felt that if his four months infant form, after living for few more months, were to come to an end, then any of his remaining karma would come to an end. He came to Pīthikapuram as a pandit to fulfil his karma bonds with Pīthikapuram.

1 Here: "mushtilo mushti, vīra mushti" meaning alms within alms is bigoted heroic begging of alms
2 The divine Person of Time
3 Sage
4 An Indian aristocrat, often a prince, with the right to collect taxes
5 Here: ātma — the self, the soul
6 Here: shakti

"Lakshmi was very fond of her husband. She understood that the consciousness of her husband could not leave his old body. She found many a time that the form of her husband stood by her side. People donate cows to cross the Viraja River[1]. She knew that the cow who took her husband safely across the Viraja River, took birth again as a cow on the Earth. She knew this because she saw the cow. The all-knowing Srīpāda very well knew that the consciousness of the husband of Lakshmi, who crossed the Viraja River, remained merged in the pandit, who was the basic essential nature of the former.

"However, the pandit came to Pīthikapuram with a decision to fulfil his karmic bonds of indebtedness, to liquidate the karmas of the other forms of his soul through his yogic strength and to merge with the Almighty. If the pandit were to merge with the Almighty, then the infant of the Brahmin zamindar would also die. If it were to happen like that, then Lakshmi, in her next birth, would have to live and die as a virgin since that Brahmin boy who would have been her husband in that birth would have already died before her preceding birth.

"Lakshmi had an intense desire to have a next birth. Therefore, after the fall of this mortal body and after she regains the state of consciousness, she would be born in a virtuous Brahmin family. Her husband, who was the infant of the zamindar, must grow up to be an adult. Alās! Lakshmi was innocent. Without being aware of it, she was conducting Ardhanārīswara[2] yoga. All this was the sportive play of Srīpāda!

"The drama called 'discourse of the Purānas' concluded. The pandit accepted monetary gifts from the Shūdras. Lakshmi was born in the Shūdra caste. Since the pandit accepted the connection with the Shūdras, he thought that his bonds of karma with the Shūdras were redeemed. He wanted to burn away any remaining bonds of karma through the fire of yoga.

"Since he took meals in the house of Srī Bāpanārya, he felt that his bond of indebtedness relating to his Brahmin birth would be redeemed. Srī Bāpanārya went inside his house to bring the monetary honorarium to that great yogi. In the meanwhile, Lakshmi came to the house of Srī

1 The name of a river in Brahmaloka, the highest heaven where the Creator Brahma lives. Viraja means "free of greed".

2 The half male and half female form of God

Bāpanārya. A cow in the house of Lakshmi delivered a calf. She brought milk from that cow to Srī Bāpanārya's house for the preparation of a special cheese. Lakshmi had great devotion and care for Srīpāda.

"Srī Bāpanārya gave the honorarium to the pandit. The pandit sought permission to leave. Srīpāda said, 'All the people gave permission for you to leave. Only two persons refused to give you permission to leave. I am well-versed in the accounts of the traders. Unless a final settlement of the outstanding debt and its repayment, you cannot leave Pīthikapuram.'

"The Brahmin was agitated. He heard previously that Srīpāda Srīvallabha was an incarnation of Datta. Srīpāda said, 'My dear, this Lakshmi is innocent. She will live only for few more years. What should become of her after death? You were born as a Brahmin with your form of wisdom and as a shepherd, who was Lakshmi's husband, with your form of ignorance. Lakshmi had shared happiness and misery with you in that shepherd form. The consciousness within you in that shepherd form, which had crossed the Viraja River along with the cow, returned freely again to the Earth. This lady retained the consciousness of her husband with her intense fire of love. This consciousness, which is in the form of a shepherdess, will change after a few years, following the demise of her body into a Brahman consciousness. She is a Brahmin in the shape of a shepherdess. You are a shepherd in the shape of a Brahmin. I know very well about your karmic relationships. I am the personification of Padmavati Devi[1] and I blessed this lady, who will be taking birth in the future as a Brahmin lady, by putting a golden mark on her forehead. I created a māngalya[2] also for her and preserved it in Hiranya Loka[3]. When the connection with gold is snapped, the connection of the wife with her husband will also be snapped. Therefore, I safely preserved her golden auspicious wedding ornaments in Hiranya Loka. When your consciousness, which is at present encased in an infant of a few months, is withdrawn, any demon may take possession of the body and do bad deeds. So, do not redeem the debt of the karma relation with her. Instead, take a donation of gold from this woman and retain the bond of karma with her. In the next birth, you will live as an ideal couple and will become My devotees and will be liber-

1 Consort of Lord Venkateswara
2 Sacred thread of marriage
3 Literally: "illumined astral planet"; can be translated as astral plane

ated.' Saying so, Srīpāda blessed them, 'My dear children, the Brahmin infant will grow up. Lakshmi will take birth in a Brahmin family and will become his wife.' The sportive plays of Srīpāda are indeed wonderful."

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 39

Meeting with Nagendra Sastry

We received the gem of kāla nāgu[1] and continued our journey. Our eagerness to visit Srī Pīthikapuram was increasing.

The shape of Kāla Nāgus

On the way, we took hospitality in the house of a Brahmin. His name was Nagendra Sastry. He knew mantra sāstra[2]. Many cobras were moving in his house, but they were not harming anyone. He was looking after the cobras like his own children. They were freely moving on his body. Divine serpents have a gem on their hood. Nagendra Sastry worshipped serpents for many years. He prayed to the deity of the serpents[3] for a gem of kāla nāgu for the purpose of worship.

The efficacy of Nāgamani

Nagendra Sastry said, "Dear ones, today is a very good day. I went to Pīthikapuram when Srīpāda was a boy of fifteen years. I visited Pādagaya kshetra[4]. I saw a kāla nāgu around the neck of the self-born Datta idol. There was a gem on its hood. The serpents that control time are called kāla nāgus. They will have gems on their hoods. During the night, those gems emit divine light. The kāla nāgus have kundalini power. They always remain in yogic meditation like the great sages. Different gradations exist not only for humans but also for serpents. Kāla nāgus are not generally

1 The gem of a black cobra
2 The science of mantras
3 Nāga devata
4 Pithapuram, the place where the feet of the asura (demon) Gaya fell

seen by men. The nāgamani[1] on the hood of the kāla nāgu has the power to ward off the inauspicious vibrations from the planet Mars. Those inauspicious vibrations merge in the nāgamani and auspicious vibrations emanate from it. Those auspicious vibrations grant auspicious results to those afflicted by the planet Mars. If the planet Mars is not properly placed in the horoscope, fighting conditions beset life and unfavourable circumstances surround the individual. They are: enmity with inmates of the house, enmity with relatives and friends, debt difficulties, girls not getting married at the proper age and remaining as old virgins throughout their life, and even after marriage, not begetting children as well as failure in all enterprises notwithstanding great capacity and efficiency. My desire to acquire the gem of the kāla nāgu intensified after I visited the self-manifested Datta. My strong hope was that I would have extraordinary progress in all stages of my life if I were to get that gem."

The efficacy of the pādukas of Srīpāda; regulations for remedying the nāga dosha

"I was passing near the house of Srī Narasimha Varma. Srīpāda was playfully watering the trees in that premises. Srī Narasimha Varma was making small channels for watering the trees. There was an audumbara tree in the garden in their house. Srī Narasimha Varma was digging a channel near this tree for the water to penetrate easily to the roots of the tree. While digging around the base of the audumbara tree, Srī Varma found copper sandals with the footprints of Srīpāda. Those sandals were the measurements of a sixteen-year-old boy. I heard a voice, 'Nagendra Sastrī, come hither.' With wonder, I went to His presence. Srī Varma washed those sandals with coconut water. They were placed before the lotus feet of Srīpāda. Srī Varma thought that they would be given to Him for worship, but the intention of Srīpāda was different. Srīpāda kindly gave those sandals to me. He said, 'Nagendra Sastry, establish a Nagendra[2] Pītha[3] and worship these

1 Gem of serpent
2 Lord of the serpents; name of Indra's riding animal Airavata
3 Seat

pādukas[1]. You have been wishing from a long time to have the gem of kāla nāgus. I am pleased with you. I am that very Maha Swamī who is worshipped by the kāla nāgus with their divine gems and whose divine lotus feet they adore. These divine pādukas are Mine only. Worship them. People suffering from chronic diseases will approach you. When you worship these pādukas and give them tīrtha[2], their diseases will be cured. All sorts of nāga doshas[3,4] are removed. When dakshinas[5] are offered at the time of assuaging nāga dosha, it should be strictly noted and adhered to that it be a combination of some amount belonging to the wife, to the husband and to their parents. When a man offers a donation for assuaging his nāga dosha, he should receive some money from his brothers-in-law or father-in-law, i.e., from the family of his wife, and add it to his offering. When a woman offers a donation to assuage her nāga dosha, she should collect some money from her husband's family and add it to the money offered by her. When both husband and wife donate money for assuaging their nāga dosha, they should add money collected from both of their families to their own money and make an offering. The husband should give it from his self-earned money, and the wife should give it from her strī-dhan[6]. These amounts should be combined and then offered. In case an unmarried girl donates money for the removal of her nāga dosha, she should add some money from her father and also from her maternal uncles and then donate. In this way, nāga dosha will be completely eliminated.

1 Sandals worshipped as holy
2 Holy water from the worship
3 An affliction caused due to the wrong done to a serpent
4 *Editor's note*: For an incarnating soul, the semen of the man is the means and the ovum is the residence. The incarnating soul enters into the brain of a man as a fiery element and later enters into the semen, travels downwards during an act of sex and enters into the ovum, resulting in pregnancy. The tissue of the semen is in the form of a serpent in its micro form. Indulging into a lustful act of sex in an illicit manner is regarded in the Vedic wisdom as killing a serpent. Each time the sexual act is performed with lust and in an unlawful manner, he keeps killing serpents. The consequence of a constant burning away of serpents is the curse of being barren. The man loses the ability to give birth to a child; the woman loses her ability to get impregnated with a soul. This is seen as the negative effect of nāga dosha.
5 Monetary offering
6 Money given to a lady by her parents at the time of her marriage

"'Once upon a time, besieged by the demons Shumba and Nishubha[1], the gods reached the Himalayas and praised the Goddess Hymavathi[2]. Then, from the body of Gauri[3], a goddess named Kaushiki emerged. When Kaushiki left her body, Paravati's form turned black and that form became well-known with the name Kāli. That Kāli form again wished to change into the form of Gauri. When this thought popped up, she immediately disappeared. Shiva[4] asked Narada about her whereabouts.

"'Then, Narada said that she was on the north side of Sumeruvu[5]. With the orders of Shiva, Narada approached her and prayed, 'Mother, please marry Shiva and be happy.' Hearing this marriage proposal, she became angry. There emerged a Shodasi[6] idol from her body. From that Chayavigraham[7] form, the form of Tripura Bhairavi[8]emerged. When Parvati is in the form of the destroyer, a physical union with Shiva will not be possible. Instead, she will be filled with anger and emotion. The kāla nagus, which rule over the time, are responsible for causing this anger and emotion in Parvati. Since I am the form of Maha Vishnu, I created nāgamanis through Shiva's trident[9]. I bestowed a boon that these gems will be worn by the kāla nagus. In addition, I have given the blessing that kāla nagus will stay on the bodies of Shiva and Paravati as ornaments. Since Hymavathi[10] is My sister, I have laid down a stipulation that nāga dosha will not be completely remedied unless money from their family is added to the dakshina[11]. My dear Nagendra Sastry, follow My words meticulously. Utilize your proficiency in the nāga sāstra for the wellbeing of the world.

1 Two asuras (demons)
2 Name of Parvati, meaning, coming from the Himavat (Himalayas)
3 A name of Parvati
4 Here: Parameswara, a name of Shiva
5 The mount Meru; the prefix su means excellent
6 The 4th form of the dasa maha vidyas: Shodasa: The sixteen sacraments that traditionally Hindus aspire to fulfil in their lifetime
7 Embodiment of a shadow image or reflection; a powerful shadow form; Kāli (meaning dark) is said to be the shadow form of Gauri (meaning fair and golden)
8 The 6th form of the dasa maha vidyas
9 Here: Trishul; weapon of Shiva
10 A name of Parvati
11 Monetary offering

Spiritual results for devotees of Datta

"'In due course of time, Shankar Bhatt and Dharma Gupta will come to you. Give them My divine pādukas and receive a divine gem of kāla nāgus from them. There is a time limit for the functions of the body. There is a time limit for the mind. There is a time limit for prāna[1]. The soul is beyond time limits. As long as the planets and stars exist, time continues to exist. Growth and decay take place as per the time. Many universes originate, develop, remain for some time and then undergo dissolution. *All this is the greatness of time. That time-form is under My control. Kāla Purusha*[2] *will always favour My devotees. Even devils, ghosts, spirits and such terrible forces cannot do any harm to those who adore Srī Datta. I am the strongest of all the living creatures in this Creation. The living beings derive strength and develop from Me. I withdraw My strength from those who are proud and become frenzy with arrogance. Pride and arrogance are the roots of all evils. Those who worship Me and remember Me at all times, will live with eternal gratification and happiness.'* Srīpāda explained thus.

"Those great persons arranged meals for me in the house of Srī Narasimha Varma. Srī Varma used to donate great quantities of food. Lord Datta likes donating food very much. He feels a sense of scarcity when any living being suffers with hunger. He is the well-wisher of all creatures.

"I took permission of Srīpāda and left that place. I constructed an ashram in this place. I have been preaching about varnāshrama dharmas[3] to all those who come to me.

"In the meantime, my wife died and I became very depressed. One day, the wife of a barber died due to a snake bite. By employing the nāga vidya[4] known to me, I brought back the snake and got the poison removed, but the barber's wife did not like to re-enter into that body. Instead, she wanted to freely roam in the world of vital force[5] and possess people. She intended to enjoy when people were distressed. The barber requested to bring back his wife to life. Then I told him that I

1 Life force
2 The divine Person of Time
3 The Hindu classification of society according to caste (varna) and age (ashrama)
4 Knowledge about snakes
5 Prānamaya Jagat

would introduce the soul of my wife into that body and that he should treat her as his own mother. He agreed.

"The soul of my dead wife was introduced into the body of the barber's wife. It meant that my wife became alive again. The wife of the barber was a very bad one. Because she was a shrew, all the nerves in her body were defective. My wife was feeling agitated to reside in that defective body. She was having a burning sensation all over her body. She had extreme pain. She repeatedly requested me to allow her to leave the body.

"News spread in the village where I lived that a Brahmin by the name of Nagendra Sastry brought back to life the wife of a barber and that he was having illicit contact with her and that he was doing a lot of injustice to the barber. Therefore, the caste chiefs of the barber decreed that the above misdeeds must be made known to the Brahmins living in the neighbourhood and that I should be banished from my caste, and that three-fourths of the money that was earned by me through mantras and tantras should be given to the barber as compensation and that only one-fourth of the amount should be retained by me (Nagendra Sastry).

"My position was very troublesome. No one was willing to listen to my explanation of the matter. The dead wife of the barber possessed some ladies and told them that she was the ghost of the dead wife of Nagendra Sastry and that it was the duty of the head man of the barber caste to stop the misdeeds of her husband. All of them got into a rage and threatened to kill me and the barber woman.

"I sought the refuge of Srīpāda. Then Srīpāda averred, 'Simply because you are the husband, it is not proper for you to order your wife to enter into the body of the wife of the barber. Not only that. You should serve those that are suffering with your knowledge of mantra sāstra without expecting any remuneration. You should not be greedy for money. You should happily accept whatever they give you.' I obeyed the commands of Srīpāda. Afterwards, the soul of my wife left the body of the barber's wife. That body was cremated."

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Chapter 40

Meeting with Bhaskara Sastry

Strange experiences of Shankar Bhatt and Dharma Gupta

We were travelling by using many modes of conveyance. We were travelling sometimes on foot, sometimes on double bullock cart, and on horse carriage on another occasions. After travelling for some days, we reached a great kshetra called Tripurantakam[1]. We saw Srī Tripurantakeswara temple there. I had many experiences. We had the divine pādukas of Srī Charan with us. As we travelled we felt as if Srī Charan was also with us. When we took steps, we felt as if Srī Charan was in our bodies and was taking steps. When we spoke, we were not aware of what we were speaking, but we felt that He was speaking through us. When we took meals, we felt as if He was taking meals by residing in us. We had a feeling that Srīpāda was totally filled in our bodies, flesh, blood and nerves. We have heard the theory that jīvatma[2] is Paramātma[3], but we had never seen or heard of this sort of miracle where the entire body was filled with the consciousness of Srīpāda, and experience was granted to us without having any touch with Him.

The priest of the Srī Tripurantakeswara temple was Bhaskara Sastry. He was very affectionate towards us. He was a resident of Srī Pīthikapuram and was employed at this temple for the daily worship. He was a devotee of Shodasi Raja Rajeswari[4]. The goddess Srī Raja Rajeswari — the resident of Srī Pīthikapuram, the consort of Lord Srī Kukkuteswara — granted him initiation in mantra during a dream. He requested both of us to be his guests. He noticed that we had the pādukas of Srīpāda with us.

1 A village in the Prakasam district in Andhra Pradesh; home of the Srī Tripurantakeswara Swamī temple
2 The individual self or the soul
3 Super-self / super soul
4 The 4th form of the dasa maha vidyas

We placed the pādukas in his room of worship. A divine voice was heard from those pādukas:

"My children, you are very fortunate. *These pādukas should be worshipped by Bhaskara Sastry. These pādukas are in copper form now. After some years, they will change to be golden pādukas on account of the strength of the chanting of mantras by Bhaskara Sastry. Some great personages from Hiranya Loka*[1] *will come and take these golden pādukas to Hiranya Loka and will worship them there. Then they will take them to Kārana Loka*[2]*. They will later be brought to Me in Maha Kārana Loka*[3] *where I reside. I will personally wear My pādukas. Wearing them, I will come to Kārana Loka and will bless the divine souls there. Then I will visit Hiranya Loka and will bless the great persons there. Then My pādukas will acquire effulgence. Then eighteen thousand great siddha purushas will carry those pādukas on a golden vimana*[4] *to My birthplace. With the chanting of incantations and divine camphor hārati*[5]*, they will be established at 360 fathoms deep below the earth in My birthplace. There, golden hued heavenly serpents will worship those golden pādukas. Sixty-four thousand yogini groups worship Me. They will place those pādukas on a golden throne. I will hold darbar there every day surrounded by groups of yoginis and sages. A golden Pīthikapuram attached to the Earth with different measurements exists in an invisible state. Only the ordinary Pīthikapuram on the Earth will be visible to the ordinary people. The golden Pīthikapuram can be seen only by people with yogic insight. Above the place where My golden pādukas are established, My pādukas will be established on the outer crest of the Earth in Pīthikapuram. Therefore, all of you be happy. Many wonders will occur in the future. My devotees will flock like rows of ants to visit My pādukas in My Maha Samsthan."*

We were wonderstruck with joy. Srī Bhaskara Sastry was a great devotee who worshipped Shodasi Raja Rajeswari. I requested him to narrate the glory of Srī Raja Rajeswari to us.

1 Literally: "illumined astral planet"; can be translated as astral plane
2 World of causes
3 The great causal ocean
4 Celestial flying chariot or palace
5 Waving of lighted camphor

Srī Raja Rajeswari is a symbol of discrimination

Then he said, "My dear ones, the consciousness of Srī Raja Rajeswari is seated in an expansive region beyond our thinking mind and will. Our thinking mind generally transforms into intellectual power. Her purificatory programme is to stop that transformation and instead transforms mind into discrimination. That great Mother helps us in that process. She showers her grace to expand our will by overcoming our narrow limits. *Strength and discrimination generally do not co-exist at one place. However, if we receive the grace of the goddess Srī Raja Rajeswari both strength and discrimination will dwell in us.* The divine consciousness is infinite. She enables our mind to open up to that infiniteness. She cooperates with us for the development of liberal ideas in us and in the universe. Her grace is very essential for obtaining extraordinary divine knowledge, for developing eternal divine maternal powers in us and in the universe and for achieving great accomplishments. *Srī Raja Rajeswari Devi is a symbol for infinite discrimination. If she wishes to know something, there is nothing that will not be known to Her.*

"She can grasp all matters, about all living beings, and their natures, the driving forces behind them, the dharma of this world and the appropriate time concerning it. She has no partiality whatsoever. She has no affection or hatred towards anyone. She accepts those people who earned vision of the future through the strength of their spiritual endeavour as her intimate confidants.

"People who have the grace of Srī Raja Rajeswari will be able to destroy inimical forces with the power of their discrimination. The goddess grants them appropriate results. She is not attached to anything in Creation and remains unattached. She deals with everyone, taking into consideration their nature, necessity and capacity. Srī Raja Rajeswari does not forcibly impose her will on anyone. She leads those who desire evolution in a way suitable for them. She allows ignorant ones to go in their ignorant ways. She respects the individuality developed by those people. She is not bothered if the people are uplifted or spoiled. Her compassion is boundless and inexhaustible. She considers all as her children. She regards even giants, ghosts and devils as her children. Her mercy is not blind like that of the humans. She will not forgo her discrimination even when she has lot of

mercy. She will not swerve from the path ordained by Paramātma. Wisdom is the centre for the power exercised by her. Therefore, if we obtain her grace, truth will be brought out and we will receive teachings of truth and wisdom. To obtain her grace, we must pursue relentless dedication to duty and truth. Then only we will be blessed by her.

"Since I was a resident of Pīthikapuram and had the mercy of Srīpāda, I achieved the grace of Srī Raja Rajeswari. Today is my dīksha[1] time. I must spend a greater part of the time today in meditation. Tomorrow I will tell you under what circumstances Srīpāda left Pīthikapuram on a tour. Srīpāda accepted some pulihora (rice mixed with tamarind sauce) offered by me, before your arrival here. He gives dārshan in the form of Srī Raja Rajeswari. Take this maha prasād[2] and you also meditate." Srī Bhaskara Sastry told like that.

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

1 A spiritual discipline to change one's behaviour and habits
2 Food given as an offering

Chapter 41

The Story of a Sanyasi

Srī Bhaskara Sastry told us that Srīpāda Srīvallabha is an embodiment of Maha Saraswati, Maha Lakshmi, Maha Kāli and Srī Raja Rajeswari. The feminine nature in Srīpāda can only be comprehended by the sādhakas[1] who make a regular and disciplined worship.

I heard that there are four types of speech[2], namely parā, pasyanti, madhyama and vaikhari. I asked Srī Bhaskara Sastry to give some explanation about them. Srī Bhaskara Sastry said, "Goddess Ambika is expressed through every speech. She speaks through every person and speaks within every individual. The speech which is heard outside is called sthūla vāk[3]. The speech that is not heard outside but is within and can be perceived only in the lip movement is called madhyama vāk. The speech that is subtler than madhyama vāk is called vaikhari vāk. The speech that stays in the throat and comes up to the mouth without coming out but remains in the midway and moves about in the mind is called pasyanti vāk. The speech that is still subtler and dwells in the navel only as an intention is called parā vāk.

"Ambika is also worshipped as Tripura Bhairavi[4]. She is the presiding Mother of the three attributes[5], three worlds, the Trinity and the three states of existence. She makes Triputi[6] as her Tripura[7] and rules over the three worlds. When we have devotion and make total self-submission and take complete refuge in her, no harm will be done to us even when we encounter hostility from this world or from invisible worlds. Hostile forces are not limited only to the physical world. We have states of existence such as states of life force, of physical plane, and of spiritual plane related to the

1 Spiritual seekers
2 Here: vāk
3 Gross speech
4 The 6th form of the Dasa Maha Vidyas
5 Sattva, rajas and tamas
6 Threefold manifestation
7 Three cities

mental strata of the inner self. There are different worlds also accordingly. If we were to develop adequately, then we can live in those worlds, just as we are living in the physical world. *If a man wants to progress well, he should primarily possess devotion and along with strong faith. Devotion means acceptance with complete belief. Confidence has to be gained through experience. We then must live on the basis of that confidence only. We should always have confidence that help will certainly come during times of need. If we have a sense of security along with confidence, then it becomes self-confidence.*

"Knowledge without strength leads to inaction. Strength without knowledge becomes blind and leads to destruction. Therefore, we will need to get liberated from the bonds of nature through knowledge. Then we must attain perfection by the grace of shakti[1]*. Shakti must have the permission from knowledge.*

"In the path of Sānkhya[2], consciousness is called as a male and nature[3] is called as a female. In the lower planes, there is conflict between these two. Consciousness does not perform action. Nature has no knowledge. Creation occurs only when these two combine. They both have a handicap. *If you look at consciousness, it is lame. If you look at nature, it is blind. To demonstrate that blindness and lameness exist in this world, a blind brother and a lame brother were born in the family in which Srīpāda was born. These births represent the fact that consciousness is lame, and that nature is blind.*

"At the higher planes, the consciousness and nature are called as Eswara and Eswari. There is no conflict between the two at the higher planes. *When Srīpāda thought that the proper time had come, He completely removed the lameness and blindness of His brothers. He had done this only as an indication of the grand programme that will be undertaken by Him for the eradication of this kind of lameness and blindness.*

"In the transcendental state, the consciousness and nature are called Brahman and Māya. *The inner meaning of His leaving the house during His sixteenth-year and parting from the family and wandering about as an ascetic was to declare Himself as Brahman and in the same way also as*

1 Strength
2 Discrimination between the world of becoming and the world of being
3 That which conducts action

Māya. The shakti that brings limitation to the Brahman — who is unlimited and who has infinite attributes — is Māya. His birth in Pīthikapuram indicates that in spite of being the boundless essential nature of Brahman, He worked within the limitations subjected by Māya. It was made clearly known that after sixteen years, He was not a prisoner of Māya anymore and that He would be the limitless essential nature of Brahman. He is the highest essence who incarnated for the upliftment of the devotees.

"In the lower level, nature[1] appears to be very strong. To illustrate this, many controversies, discussions and difficulties brought about by nature in Pīthikapuram are to be found in the biography of Srīpāda. Later, in the middle plane, Purusha (the male) and Prakriti (nature) are equals. In this state, there were some non-believers and people who created problems. Similarly, there were people who recognized Him as an incarnation after having different experiences and gaining confidence.

"At the stage of leaving Pīthikapuram, Māya remained merged in Him. He very clearly declared that He was an incarnation of Parabrahman, and then displayed His sportive plays of divine incarnation extensively. Since the atmosphere in Pīthikapuram was not suited for that, He left Pīthikapuram.

"When His glory spreads all over the globe, at some time in the coming centuries, wisdom will also dawn to the residents of Pīthikapuram, according to His will. In its complete expressed state, His divine power of consciousness will remove the lameness of human consciousness and the blindness of nature."

When I asked Srī Bhaskara Sastry under which circumstances Srīpāda left Pīthikapuram, he said:

"The divine līlas of Srīpāda are beyond the imagination of the common people. Once, a sanyasi came to the Kukkuteswara temple[2]. He was a devotee of Datta. He offered to initiate people into Datta worship. He announced that if Datta dīksha[3] was observed for forty days, all the wishes would be fulfilled. The Brahmin community in Pīthikapuram also accepted dīkshas. He received large amounts as dakshina[4]. He gave some part of the collected amount to the Brahmins who took dīksha from him. Brahmins told

1 Here: Prakriti
2 Temple in Pithapuram mainly dedicated to Lord Shiva
3 A spiritual discipline towards Datta to change one's behaviour and habits
4 Monetary offering

the people of other castes that they should also take dīksha from the sanyasi and give him generous donations to fulfil their lives. Unable to disregard the words of Brahmins, many people received dīksha and gave large amounts to the sanyasi as dakshina. In the meanwhile, discussions started whether all can take Datta dīksha. A combined meeting of the assemblies of Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas was held. It was presided over by Srī Bāpanārya. Srī Bāpanārya remarked, 'Srī Datta belongs to all. All can take dīksha. Therefore, all the castes can receive dīksha from the sanyasi. Opportunity for taking dīksha should be given to all the people.'

"The majority of the members in the assembly of Brahmin said, 'Sir! Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas adhere to religious observance. Therefore, they can receive the dīksha. Shūdras are irreligious. Therefore, they should not receive the dīksha. We can only accept dakshinas from them and uplift them with our power of penance.'

"Then Srī Bāpanārya expressed his opinion saying, 'Religious and irreligious people exist in all castes. It is difficult to decide who adheres to strict religious observances and who does not follow strict religious observances. Therefore, keeping the prosperity and welfare of the entire society in view, we can hold Datta homa[1] or other sacrifices, rituals and programmes and obtain welfare for the entire society. I feel that simply receiving dakshinas from Shūdras and denying dīksha to Shūdras is unjust. If we receive dakshinas and uplift Shūdras with the power of our penance, we can similarly uplift the remaining Brahmin, Kshatriya and Vaishya castes as well. If it were so, there is no need to give special dīkshas to people of a particular caste. Not only that. A large amount was fixed as dakshina. Poor people exist in all castes. They cannot give such large amounts of dakshina. Poor people who labour to earn food will have to starve for many days after giving such heavy amounts of dakshinas. *Dakshina should be given voluntarily. That which is offered according to one's capacity and with pleasure should only be accepted as dakshina. Then only Datta will feel happy'*

"The Brahmins raised an objection stating, 'Even though we happen to be Brahmins when that great Paramahamsa[2] Parivrajaka[3] (wandering ascetic) came to our village, we did not even welcome him with pūrna

1 A fire ritual dedicated to Dattatreya
2 Lit. "Highest Swan"; a realised master
3 Wandering monk

kumbha[1] and Vedic mantras. Not only that. When he offered to give Datta mandala dīksha for the welfare of all people, the assembly of Brahmins is displaying an indifferent attitude. It is really shameful.'

"Then Srī Bāpanārya said, 'If the visitor is really a Paramahamsa Parivrajaka, there are certain formalities to welcome him. A few days before his arrival, he should pass on the information about his visit through his main disciples to the Brahmin assembly here. Then the Brahmin assembly will take their complete details into account and will carry on discussions about sāstras with the main disciples. Thereby, the proficiency of the main disciples in sāstras will be known. Then the assembly will come to a conclusion and will decide if the disciples belonged to a worthy Paramahamsa Parivrajaka. Afterwards, when the Paramahamsa Parivrajaka arrives he will be accorded welcome with the chanting of Vedic mantras and with pūrna kumbha. After that, discussion on scriptures will be carried on with him. Then following his suggestion, yagna[2], yāga[3], dīksha or discourse will be organized. Without any of these, Paramahamsa Parivrajaka came to the Kukkuteswara temple. He immediately broached about Datta dīksha with you. Did this not happen against our regulations?' Srī Bāpanārya questioned.

"The Brahmins replied, 'This is not the time to discuss whether regulations were violated. Will you and your son-in-law Appalaraja Sarma receive the dīkshas and give the dakshinas?' Srī Bāpanārya answered, 'We two take dīkshas for the collective welfare of all and not for our individual welfare. Since we are not undertaking dīkshas from the sanyasi, we are not going to give dakshinas to him. If any of the Brahmins are prepared to take up dīkshas from the sanyasi and offer dakshinas to him, they are at liberty to do so. The Brahmin assembly will make decisions only about matters concerning collective problems and welfare and not your personal dīkshas, problems and solutions.' Srī Bāpanārya affirmed decisively. Srī Sreshti and Srī Varma also refused to receive mandala dīksha from the ascetic. Nevertheless, Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas were given liberty either to take or not to take Datta mandala dīksha from the ascetic.

1 An ornamental vase filled with water and covered with mango leaves and flowers
2 Sacrifice, ritualistic worship
3 Sacrifice

Srīpāda gives Datta dīksha

"There were some farmers who had devotion and care for Srīpāda. Among them, Venkayya was an important one. Srīpāda went to the house of Venkayya. He announced that He would give Datta dīkshas and no one should be disappointed that they were unable to take up dīkshas from the sanyasi. In addition to it, he declared that dakshina can be offered according to one's own capacity. He also added that mandala dīksha was not required in His case, and that it will be sufficient if the dīksha was observed for one night. Srīpāda was in the house of Venkayya for one complete day and night. Srīpāda gave dīkshas to people of all eighteen varieties of castes. Among those who took dīkshas, there were some Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas as well.

Srīpāda declares that He is Datta

"This was the day when Srīpāda openly declared that He was Srī Datta. That day happened to be a Thursday, which was very dear to Lord Datta. He gave His auspicious blessings to all those who received dīksha and made them perform bhajan[1]*. He declared that He was Datta, and that an elaborate programme was waiting for Him, and that as soon as devotees remember Him, He will be pleased and will fulfil their desires.*

"On the early morning of the next day, i.e., Friday, Srīpāda went to the house of Srī Narasimha Varma. There, Srīpāda was given ceremonial anointment. He accepted only one banana and gave it to a cow in the house of Narasimha Varma. Afterwards, He came to the house of Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti. There also the ceremonial anointment was performed for Him. There, He received butter, milk, butter milk and cream. He said that His devotees were calling Him and that the time had come to leave Pīthikapuram. Then He reached the house of His maternal grandfather Srī Bāpanārya. There also He had the ceremonial anointment. *He declared that He was verily Datta Himself and that the form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha was only a* Māya *form; that people suffering from troubles*

1 Songs in praise of God

and patients tormented by diseases were calling Him with agony; and that it was time to declare clearly that He was Datta and commence the programme of uplifting the world through His divine līlas.

"After that He reached His home. When the parents brought the subject of His marriage, Srīpāda said humbly, 'Mother, I have already given dārshan along with Anaghā Lakshmi many a time to grandfather, Srī Sreshti and Srī Varma. Many people witnessed the divine couple with their sportive plays roaming in the fields of Srī Sreshti, in the farms of Srī Varma and in the mango groves.

"Look here! See My form combined with Anaghā Lakshmi! Look at this divine glorious and auspicious form of Mine. I told even at the time of My arrival in the guise of an avadhūta[1] that I would leave the house if the matter of My marriage was brought about.'

"After giving the vision of that auspicious form, He touched His brothers. By the ambrosial looks of Srīpāda, the physical handicaps of His brothers were removed. Sumatī Maharani and Appalaraja Sarma remained motionless. They were unable to speak anything. In the meanwhile, His maternal grandmother Rajamāmba, maternal grandfather Srī Bāpanārya, Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti and his wife Venkata Subbamāmba, Srī Narasimha Varma and his wife Ammajamma came there. He spoke with all of them very cordially, smiling blissfully. Then Sumatī Maharani remarked, 'My dear one, you are saying that you are departing after repaying all debts, but the debts for milk from Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti, Vatsavāyi Raja, and Malladi families cannot be redeemed by you.'

Disappearance of Srīpāda

"Srīpāda said to His mother, 'Mother, I am not denying what you say. As long as these three families do not forget Me, I will not forget them. Even if they forget, I will remind them of Me. Even by coercing them, I will take their services and give them good results. I will take meals in someone's house belonging to your parents' family in every generation. However, I will not take dakshina. I know that your family of birth will regard Me with

1 Persons liberated from karmic bondages, beyond ego-consciousness and duality

affection as their nephew. I will also respect this human relationship and behave like a dutiful nephew. What more do the family of your parents want?' Then turning to His father, He said, 'In our Ghandikota family, Vedas will remain for a very long time. Both My brothers would become good Vedic scholars. As long as the Ghandikota family will not forget Me, I will also not forget them.

"'*Srīdhara Sarma will be born in one of his births as a great person named Samardha Ramadas. Narasimha Varma will be born as Chatrapati Shivaji*[1] *at that time. Samardha Ramadas will act as the preceptor of Shivaji and in this way the connection of priesthood between the two families will get well established. Ramaraja Sarma will take birth under the name Srīdhara and will become a great yogi. A great Samsthan in My name will be established in Pīthikapuram by the lineage of disciples of Srīdhara*[2]*. Our bond of indebtedness with Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti will be strengthened. Not only that, but the Vatsavāyi family people will come afterwards.'* Thus, Srīpāda assured.

"The Savitri Panna was recited. Srīpāda regarded Vedas as His life. While the recitation of the Vedas was happening, He disappeared while all people there were watching."

***Victory unto** Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!*

1 A great Indian warrior king (1627/30 – 1680)

2 (1925 -) Disciple of Srīdharaswamī; developed the Samsthan at the birthplace of Srīpāda

Chapter 42

Chanting of the Prayer "Datta Digambarā! Datta Digambarā! Srīpāda Vallabha Datta Digambarā!" Started by the Pīthikapuram Residents for the First Time, Spreads Throughout the World.

Srīpāda gives His divine dārshan to His parents, Bāpanārya, Narasimha Varma and Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti at all times

After lunch, Srī Bhaskara Sastry started telling, "Srīpāda gave Datta dīksha in the houses of a Shūdra, that too only for one night. He did give any worship that was normally prescribed in the rules of a typical dīksha. He only tied a thread around the wrists of devotees and made them sing only bhajans. The Brahmins in Pīthikapuram thought that it was all contrary to what was written in the sāstras. They also took objection to Srīpāda declaring Himself as Datta and that if they remembered Him, His devotees' troubles would vanish. They thought all these statements were ridiculing the sāstras. All the Brahmins unanimously resolved to submit the matter to Srī Ādi Sankaracharya and expel Srī Bāpanārya and Srī Appalaraja Sarma from the Brahmin caste. However, in the meanwhile, the sudden disappearance of Srīpāda became a matter of discussion. In spiritual matters, no title would be announced without the permission of Srī Ādi Sankaracharya. So, they thought that it would be a treason against divinity to declare a boy, who was not even sixteen years of age, as an incarnation of Lord Datta Himself.

"Some Brahmins who were hypocrites came to the house of Srī Bāpanārya to express sympathy. No one in the house was sad because of the disappearance of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. To top it all, Srī Bāpanārya said, 'Now Datta is flourishing very remarkably. The great Lord moved in our house in the form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. He gave us divine bliss. He removed the veil of Māya covering our eyes. Today, He is in the wink of our eyes. He is giving His divine dārshan to our inner vision many more times than before. We are very fortunate.' The visiting Brahmins were taken aback. With tainted thoughts

inside, but outwardly uttering sympathetic words, they went from there to the house of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. There, Sumatī Maharani, Srī Appalaraja Sarma, brothers and sisters of Srīpāda were all extremely happy.

"Srī Appalaraja Sarma affirmed, 'Previously, we had lot of anxieties about Srīpāda. Our minds are now relieved. He is appearing before our mental eyes as soon as we think about Him. He is talking with us with a gross body as soon as we wish. Our births got fulfilled because we happened to be the parents of Lord Datta Himself. We are having unprecedented happiness.' The circumstances there were quite contrary to the expectations of the Brahmins.

"Srī Venkatappayya Sreshti said, 'Oh, noble Brahmins! Previously, we were spending only a few hours with Srīpāda, but now He is not only constantly moving before our mental eyes but also appearing with His physical body and roaming in our house.'

"Srī Narasimha Varma said to the Brahmins, 'The veils of Māya which shrouded our eyes are now removed. The great Lord, who is an eternal reveller, rejoicer of divine delight, is moving in our house. He is cracking jokes with us and is with us, behind us and is continually in our sight. He is giving us dārshan with His physical body more than before.'

"These matters were conveyed to the sanyasi in the Kukkuteswara temple. Agitation started in the bosom of the sanyasi. He thought, 'Srīpāda clearly proclaimed that He was verily Lord Datta Himself and has now disappeared. Not mentioning the name of any other deity, Srīpāda mentioned Himself as Srī Dattatreya, who is the deity worshipped by him[1]. Srī Dattatreya probably incarnated in the form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. If His incarnation is true, then it would be equally true that I will face difficulties in the future. Lord Datta is of strange nature. He will bring difficulties to me, see the fun, and will rescue only after my total surrender. That is His nature. I thought that it was the mercy of Lord Datta that so many Brahmins honoured me on a large scale and money was amassed on a grand scale. In the form of Srī Datta's mercy, were there any special punishments earmarked for me only?

"'Lord Datta knows my hankering for name, fame and money. The Brahmins who followed me were also after money. There was no spiritual

1 Here: Upāsya deity

power to me or to these Brahmins. Datta dīkshas were designed only to attract money. In case their desires did not get fulfilled, those who undertook these dīkshas will think that it was their failure in due observance of dīksha. If their wishes got fulfilled, they will believe it was the result of the dīksha. Is not Srīpāda going to push me into troubles through some strange and peculiar procedure?' Thus, the sanyasi shivered with fear.

"In the meantime, an old Brahmin came to the Kukkuteswara temple. He said that his name was Narasimha Khan, and that he belonged to the lineage of Sage Kāsyapa. He mentioned that he came from the region of Maharashtra, especially for the dārshan of the great Lord Kukkuteswara. He added that he heard that a Paramahamsa Parivrajaka was giving Datta dīkshas there and that he came there to have his dārshan. He secretly carried many varahās near his waist. He offered all those coins as dakshina to the sanyasi. On receipt of the money, the sanyasi was filled with immense joy. At the time of initiation, the sanyasi asked the old Brahmin to stretch his hand so that he can pour water from the kamandalu. The Brahmin stretched his hand. Along with water, a scorpion fell into his hand. Then the tone of that Brahmin turned stubborn. He said, 'You poured water into my hand and asked me to drink. What a wonder! The fruits of your tapas earned by you from so many years are now solemnly endowed to me. I am bestowing them in turn to Pīthikapuram'. The sanyasi was wonderstruck. The old Brahmin disappeared in a moment. Suddenly, a Brahmin cried that he was bitten by a scorpion. That Brahmin was one among those who took the dīksha from the sanyasi. An incantation was applied on the Brahmin as an antidote for the scorpion bite. However, his pain did not subside. Various mantras were chanted, but there was no improvement. A water ritual[1] was performed to the Kukkuteswara idol. A large quantity of camphor was lit. The Brahmin fainted. Foam came out from his mouth. It was confirmed that he was bitten by a snake and not a scorpion.

"Some people noticed that a scorpion fell into the hands of the old Maharashtrian Brahmin along with the water from the kamandalu[2]. Therefore, some people said that the scorpion might have bitten the Brahmin.

"God only knows what sort of rumours originate, how quickly they circulate and involve people in troubles in Pīthikapuram. Some people were

1 Abhisheka
2 Water pot

suspecting that the sanyasi, who gave those Datta dīkshas, was mainly responsible for the non-reduction of the Brahmin's pain from the scorpion bite in spite of the performance of a water ritual to the Kukkuteswara idol and camphor hārati[1] to the self-manifested Datta.

"In place of coins offered by the old Brahmin from Maharashtra, pieces of coal were there. The heartbeat of the sanyasi started palpitating with fear that Srīpāda Srīvallabha might have come in this fashion to punish him.

"A strange rumour spread fast in Pīthikapuram that there was a kind of art known only to the koyas and chenchus[2] who move in hills and dales and who were well versed in mantras and tantras; that the sanyasi applied that art on the Brahmin; that according to this art, a ghost would emerge from water in the shape of a scorpion; that after biting someone, that scorpion would change to be a serpent; that the moment it would change to be a serpent, foam would come out of the person bitten by the scorpion; that the serpent would transform itself to be a ghost after sometime; that the person bitten by the scorpion would start jumping madly after the serpent would change into a ghost; that the ghost, after some time, would enter into the houses of others following the wish of the person releasing it; and that it would steal money from the houses and that it would submit that money to its master. The poor sanyasi did not know that this Pīthikapuram was the hometown of all rumours.

"The Brahmin who was vomiting foam got up after some time. He kept jumping due to some kind of pain in his stomach. Rumours spread that he would change to be a devil after some time. It was suggested that everyone should write 'Oh Devil, come tomorrow!' on their houses and, on seeing that writing, the devil would depart and this affair would repeat every day like this on account of this writing. People were cautioned that if the devil enters into the house, it would steal and take away money from the house.

"All the Brahmins who were supporting the sanyasi so far abandoned him and went to their houses. With no exception, be it a Brahmin, Kshatriya or Vaishya house, the words 'Oh Devil, come tomorrow!' were written with charcoal outside their houses.

"A farmer named Venkayya arranged for a town-wide proclamation by drum beat that a pot filled with coals should be carefully placed in the

1 Waving of lighted camphor
2 South Indian tribes

houses of all Shūdras and by this, the devil sent by the sanyasi would not steal money from Shūdra houses.

"After some time, the Brahmin who jumped madly with pain recovered. In the meanwhile, a farmer approached the Brahmin in the Kukkuteswara temple and said, 'Sir, our caste chief Venkayya wanted to give you the mantra akshatas[1] given by Srīpāda. You will become healthy from the efficacy of those mantra akshatas.'

"Then the Brahmin thought, 'Now that the ailment abated, I may really become a devil at any moment as per the rumours that are in circulation. This person is telling me to take the mantra akshatas from a Shūdra's house. Brahmins give mantra akshatas to Shūdras, but Shūdras would not summon Brahmins to their houses and give mantra akshatas. Venkayya, being a good-natured person, may be calling me, only keeping my welfare in mind.' With such feelings he received mantra akshatas from Venkayya and went home.

"As a result of the rumours that were spread in Pīthikapuram, the faith of the people from all castes on the sanyasi was lost. They all decided that it was not correct to give dakshinas to a sanyasi well versed in witchcraft. They took the money back from the sanyasi. He was sent out of the village without being beaten by the villagers. They asked Srī Bāpanārya what to do with all that money.

"Srī Bāpanārya said, 'Buy food items with that money. Provide a grand feast to the people of all castes. Lord Dattatreya will be pleased with the food donation. No individual dīkshas are necessary.'

"Opposite to the Kukkuteswara temple, sheds were constructed on a grand scale. A grand feast was arranged to people of all eighteen types of castes. *All people of Pīthikapuram for the very first time chanted the divine name 'Datta Digambarā! Datta Digambarā! Srīpāda Vallabha Datta Digambarā!' Srīpāda averred long ago that this name will spread all over the world."*

1 Rice mixed with turmeric and charged with incantations

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 43

Description of Anaghā Lakshmi

The Vaishnava Māya of Srīpāda

Srī Bhaskara Sastry, after completing his worship for the night, said, "Sirs, devoted worship of Srī Vidya is supreme. In fact, Srīpāda Srīvallabha is the embodiment of Maha Saraswati, Maha Lakshmi and Maha Kāli." I said, "Sir, Srīpāda is called an incarnation of Srī Padmavati Venkateswara[1]. You are now telling that He is also the three Mothers. He is also described as being accompanied with Anaghā Lakshmi. I do not understand anything. Kindly explain in detail."

The cosmic form of Srīpāda

Srī Bhaskara Sastry said, "Sirs, it is said that God is there in all living beings. It is said that He pervades everything from an ant up to Parabrahma. He is immanent in all Creation in the form of Creation. It means that He is in the consciousness of all living organisms. That is the specialty of this incarnation. Even though He exists as all living beings in this Creation, His touch will not be experienced by them. That is nothing but His Vaishnavamāya[2]. He would say that one should respect the relations, limits and the rules related to them. When we say that He is in the forms of Maha Saraswati, Maha Lakshmi and Maha Kāli, it means that He is that consciousness, which expressed itself in those forms. Through His yoga māya, He is constantly identified with those entities. When He identifies with the consciousness of Maha Saraswati, He will also be in a state of oneness with the related four-faced Brahma. Nevertheless, He will not

1 Consort of Lord Venkateswara
2 The illusion of Vishnu

have any link of touch with either Maha Saraswati or with Hiranya Garbha[1] forms. It is also mentioned that a single ātma[2] emerges in four or five masculine forms. The shakti principle of that ātma may be born in four or five feminine forms. The relation between one male form and one female form is decided by fate and its limitations should be followed strictly.

"In the same way, He is Anaghā, accompanied with His consort Anaghā Lakshmi. That is His form of Ardhanārīswara[3]. However, in the form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, He is in the form of a hermit. He enjoins that the relations and limitations of the forms with attributes are to be strictly followed. This is a subtlety of dharma. Dharma is different and subtle dharma is different. To shower His divine grace abundantly, He exists in the form of Creation. Since He is in a state of identification with the Creation, it will mean that the progress of the humans will be accelerated. *Srīpāda is absorbed in japa[4], meditation and penance. He will not keep the result from His penance for Himself. He donates it to the entire Creation. He uses the fruits of His penance for saving His devotees from sorrow and diseases and releases them from the shackles of karma.*

"The four forms of Jaganmāta — Maha Saraswati, Maha Lakshmi, Maha Kāli and Raja Rajeswari — got manifested for the revelation of divinity and for the administration of the universe.

Ambika has three levels:

- Transcendental level
- Universal level
- Individual level.

"Prior to the actual Creation, Parāshakti remains in the transcendental level. After attracting infinite realities of the Paramātma[5], and after their entry into Her consciousness, She takes birth as creation of the world.

"Her work is not completed with the Creation. She creates all living beings; She sustains them within Her; She enters into them and strengthens them. This is Her universal level.

1 The golden egg of creation; Brahma
2 The self, the soul
3 The half male and half female form of God
4 Repetition of the name of God
5 Super-self / super soul

The real image of Anaghā Lakshmi

"At the individual level, She exists as an intermediary between the human personality and the divine nature. That is the secret in the advent of Anaghā Lakshmi form. She makes some potencies of Her Prime Nature to incarnate. When the work to be carried out by those potencies is completed, She again attracts them into Her Prime Nature. Without the will of Anaghā, Anaghā Lakshmi will not do even a small task. She fulfils the will of Her Lord. Since She exists as both father and mother in the form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, grace will be plenty to the devotees of Srīpāda.

"Anaghā Lakshmi mainly has three planes. The good, wise and happy plane[1] belongs to the pāra state. The worlds here are filled with infinite existence, infinite power and infinite heavenly happiness. The souls in that state live in undescribable perfection and in changeless oneness.

"Below this Satchitānanda plane, there exist worlds belonging to the comprehensive heavenly consciousness. Anaghā Lakshmi dwells in them as maha shakti of divine consciousness. This world was described in the Vedas as mahar loka. In these worlds, actions will not meet with failure. In every endeavour, the powers of will and wisdom[2] effortlessly attain perfection. All experiences there are perfect oceans of bliss. Floods, tides, untruth, pain and misery cannot enter there. Every form, every move, and every experience will be filled with joy.

"Below this is the plane of ignorance. Ignorance exists in our worlds. The worlds here are filled with mind, life and bodies. All the experiences here are subjected to imperfection, limitation and failure.

The glory of Raja Rajeswari

"The consciousness of Mother Raja Rajeswari is boundless mercy. She considers all as Her children. The dark group belonging to the prāna-

1 Satchitānanda
2 Iccha and jnāna shaktis

maya[1] and manomaya[2] planes is called asuras[3]. They have self-control, penance and intelligence. They are arrogant. The dark group belonging to the lower prānamaya plane is called rākshasas. They have terrible and extreme ideas and powers. In the still lower prānamaya plane, other varieties of creatures live. They are called pisāchas[4] and pramadhas[5]. The māya of asuras can assume any disguise. *In fact, pisāchas are not individuals. They are the formation of shapes without minds to desires and greedy wishes. Rākshasas have a very strong prānamaya state. They do not have mind. They try to devour whatever comes to their sight.*

Forms of Āsuri, Kāli, Shyama and Maha Kāli

"Kāli, Shyama[6] and other forms are visible to us through prānamaya shakti. Kāli is a destructive force. She is nature's power of ignorance that chops everything into pieces in the dark and blind struggle when troubles overwhelm us. However, Maha Kāli belongs to a higher plane. She generally appears in golden hue. She is dreadful to asuras (giants). Whereas Raja Rajeswari represents discrimination, Maha Kāli represents strength and power. In that great Mother, the overwhelming ferocity also shines with great intensity of thought, which is necessary for achieving the divine cruelty to destroy every obstacle that comes in the way. That which resides in kāli shakti proceeds with terrible speed and will not keep quiet till we set our foot on God Himself. It will stop with quarrel and destruction. However, Maha Kāli is different. When we come across the obstacles beyond our capacity and the forces hindering our progress become dominant, the devotee should invoke the Maha Kāli shakti into himself.

1 The vital plane
2 The mental plane
3 Demons
4 Devils
5 Servants of Shiva
6 Forms of Durga

The forms of Maha Kāli, Maha Lakshmi and Maha Saraswati at the level of the spiritual aspirant

"Maha Lakshmi is filled with the radiance of beauty. To achieve the power of discrimination and strength, beauty is required. It means that without it, perfection cannot be achieved regardless of our own estimate of our achievement. It means that at some level, a sort of equilibrium state will be formed. We feel that it is perfection in that state. But if we go to a higher level, we will come across some new powers and new situations. A fresh state of equilibrium to suit them will be formed. In that state, a completeness or perfection is formed. Therefore, Maha Lakshmi is the symbol of complete perfection. If perfection is achieved in discrimination but not in strength, it cannot be called perfect fulfilment. Therefore, at complete perfection, four features prevail with their respective appropriate shares, i.e., discrimination, strength, beauty and completeness. Amicability between divinity and beauty is a mystery that cannot be known to man. This beauty is spread all over the universe. Only by the grace of Maha Lakshmi, so many articles, forces, and living beings of infinite variety meet each other. All will then become unified. This state of oneness gives happiness. Maha Lakshmi moulds the different articles, forces and living beings as Her forms and types. Maha Lakshmi is the presiding deity of great love and bliss. However, Lakshmi represents only the collection of material objects. Maha Lakshmi is the great power that shapes material objects, physical forces, and earthly beings aptly into a harmonious divine bliss, and thus bestows divine life.

"But, if the power of Anaghā Lakshmi is to function fully, one should have skill also in addition to discrimination, strength and beauty. Vedas mention about Mother Saraswati. She is called Udgīta in the Upanishads. She is called Mātangi in the dasa maha vidyas[1]. She is connected with vaikhari vāk[2].

"However, Maha Saraswati is different. She represents divine dexterity and actions of the consciousness of soul. By the mercy of this great Mother, we will obtain efficiency in conducting activities and will know how to use the divine knowledge. We will learn how to apply the consciousness of the soul to the life. We will also know how happiness can be derived by the co-

1 Ten different forms of the divine feminine; ten goddesses of wisdom
2 The Word in its expressed form; the 4th stage of the Word; the manifest creation

ordination of many powers. Utmost care in all things that are far away from transformation and perfection, even in small matters, belong to Maha Saraswati.

"My dear! Bliss is a matter related to the Supreme Lord, Parameswara, but a yogi experiences ecstasy. One who has no desires gets pleasure. Comfort is within the reach of all, but sorrow also accompanies it unavoidably.

Forms of Anaghā Devi and Anaghā

"Lakshmi Devi is the form of Srī Anaghā Devi[1]. She possesses all the qualities of Raja Rajeswari, Maha Lakshmi, Maha Kāli and Maha Saraswati. Srī Anaghā's form is that of Vishnu. He got the characteristics of Parameswara and the Trinity. *Therefore, the worship of Anaghā along with Srī Anaghā Devi confers all round well-being. Anaghāsthami Vrata should be performed by all Datta devotees. By performing Anaghāsthami Vrata, you will attain all auspicious things.*

The greatness of Srīpāda and the greatness of Datta Devotion

"My dear, Anaghā, along with Srī Anaghā Devi, incarnated on the Earth in the form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. He is very close to the consciousness of all living beings physically, mentally and spiritually. He is Smarthrugāmi; that means, He responds immediately when called. He is omnipotent to remove the troubles and losses of all His devotees and dependents and grants them comforts in this world as well as in other worlds. The result derived from worshipping the Dasa Maha Vidyas will be immediately received by worshipping Datta, who has incarnated in the form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha. One certainly gets good results by worshipping different deities. By worshipping Datta, one gets such results immediately. This is possible because Datta is the combined form of all deities; He is the incarnation of all four yugas, and He is the glorious incarnation without end.

1 The trinity of Lakshmi, Parvati and Saraswati

The glory of Srīpāda Charitāmrutam

"My dear Shankar Bhatt, this great sacred book Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam written by you will also be studied by great yogis and great persons. They will try to understand it with the help of the grammar of Sandhya language. The yogic experiences derived by them will be very strange. If men in the physical plane make a devoted reading of the Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam, they will obtain comforts and auspicious developments of this world and the other worlds as well. Every letter of this book is true. Every letter in this is filled with yogic power. Every letter is endowed with the power of seed letters[1]*. In whichever language the devoted reading of this holy book is made, the same kind of result is granted. It is the letter form of the Great Lord."*

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

1 Bijaksharam

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 44

Description of Golden Pīthikapuram

Srī Bhaskara Sastry requested us to stay that night also in their house and listen to the divine history of Srīpāda. Next day, after finishing our ablutions and other daily rites, we went to the temple of Srī Tripurāntakeswar. In the temple, Srī Bhaskara Sastry started telling about Srīpāda.

The birthplace of Srīpāda

"My dear ones, Srīpāda is verily the personification of Shiva. After disappearing in Pīthikapuram, He reached the Kashi[1] town. He took a bath in the Ganges River. *With His advent in Srī Pīthikapuram, He gave thrust to the earthly nature to evolve. Therefore, the Earth in His birthplace in Pīthikapuram received live consciousness. His divine pādukas*[2] *will be established in the Maha Samsthan, which is to be founded there in the future after some centuries. There, the Earth will become alive and will gradually enliven the entire Earth. The people who receive the awakening will be attracted to Pīthikapuram on account of the divine power of attraction. We must understand that the yagna of the prithivi tattwa*[3] *performed by Him started from Pīthikapuram. All the places where He moved or He will move will be awakened. Those who step in these places will definitely be attracted by that divine power.*

"Not only that, but every person has the element of earth in him. It has the attributes of sound, touch, form, taste and smell[4]. *When we think in terms of yoga, the people in whose bodies the earthy element is awakened by His divine compassion will surely be drawn towards Pīthikapuram."*

1 Now Varanasi or Benares; holy Indian city
2 Sandals worshipped as holy
3 The principle of earth
4 Here: sabda, sparsa, rūpa, rasa and gandha

I asked, "Sir, does this mean that the people in whose bodies the element of earth has been awakened will be able to come physically to Pīthikapuram?"

The greatness of golden Pīthikapuram

He smiled and said, "Your question is reasonable! There is the golden Pīthikapuram as there is the physical Pīthikapuram. The golden Pīthikapuram spreads as far as the physical Pīthikapuram extends. *The golden Pīthikapuram is purely constructed with consciousness. When the matter related to that consciousness is grown in the seeker, he will become a resident of the golden Pīthikapuram. In the golden Pīthikapuram, there are several thousands of great mansions built with consciousness. Yogis and great persons live in that golden Pīthikapuram and enjoy ineffable bliss. However, it is not visible to the physical eyes. The golden Pīthikapuram is visible only to yogic eyes and to the eyes of wisdom.*

Distinguishing landmarks of Kashi — Pilgrimage of Pancha Kosha

"In the same manner, there is the golden Kashi. The golden Kashi, built with material of consciousness, extends up to the extent to which the physical Kashi town spreads. It is said, *'The fruits of residing in Kashi will be obtained by those persons who always think of going to Kashi and live there*[1]*. One should constantly retain Kashi Visweswara*[2] *in mind for his consciousness to dwell in the golden Kashi and to derive Kashi Visweswara's grace*. This is easy to understand. There is a Pīthikapuram composed of the elements that are connected to your annamaya kosha[3]. In the same way, there exists a Kashi that is composed of the five elements. There exists the prānamaya Pīthikapuram related to the prānamaya ko-

1 Kashi yātram gamishyama tatryva nivasa mayaham. Eti bruvana satatam kashivasa phalam labhet.
2 The Lord of the Universe
3 The material sheath; the physical and etheric body

sha[1]. In the same way, prānamaya Kashi exists. There exists manomaya Pīthikapuram related to the manomaya kosha[2]. Same is the case with manomaya Kashi. There exists vignānamaya Pīthikapuram connected to the vignānamaya kosha[3]. Similarly, there exists the vignānamaya Kashi. There exists the ānandamaya Pīthikapuram related to the ānandamaya kosha[4]. Similarly, ānandamaya Kashi exists. I call this ānandamaya Pīthikapuram as golden Pīthikapura. I call this ānandamaya Kashi as golden Kashi."

I said, "Sir! I am an ignorant one. Kindly explain this matter. Some say that doing pancha kosha yatra in Kashi gives great results. What is it?"

Srī Bhaskara Sastry said, "My dear, the pancha kosha yatra is merely a physical pilgrimage. In reality, our consciousness should travel through the five koshas, namely annamaya, prānamaya, manomaya, vignānamaya and ānandamaya koshas. This is the profound esoteric divine secret in this. *By the grace of Srīpāda, the spiritual seekers gain the needed strength to make the pancha kosha yatra. Therefore, with His yogic power, He conducts the five great yagnas*[5] *relating to the five elements. As a symbol of these five great yagnas, He holds court*[6] *in Pānchadeva Pahād near Kurungadda.* Divine secrets can be understood only by ardent spiritual seekers and those with yogic sight. They will not at all be understood by ordinary men.

"Srīpāda took a bath in the Ganga River[7]*. Then Mother Ganga appeared before Him and requested Him to take a bath in the Ganga River every day. Srīpāda gave the boon to Mother Ganga that He would bathe in Ganga daily.* The consciousness of Mother Ganga will also be in the five koshas, i.e., annamaya, prānamaya, manomaya, vignānamaya and ānandamaya koshas."

I said, "Noble one, Mother Ganga is in a watery form. How can she have five sheaths? I do not understand it."

Srī Bhaskara Sastry said like this smilingly, "My dear, deities are personification of the mantras. They do not have physical shapes.

1 Sheath of life force; vital body including the astral, desire and lower mental
2 Higher mental body
3 Higher mental and lower Buddhi
4 The soul and the principles above the soul
5 Sacrifice
6 Here: Darbar
7 Ganges River; Rivers are considered as mothers in the Indian tradition

"Mantras are the power forms of 'Sabda Brahman[1]'. Mother Ganga means a deity in the form of power and consciousness. She is the patron deity of the physical form of the Ganga River in a state of close identity. It means that she is a goddess in the form of consciousness. In the same way, when it is mentioned as the Sun god, it means the divine form in the state of consciousness in close identity with an orb called Sun[2] in the firmament. You must note this subtlety of dharma and the profound divine secret.

"Humans do possess watery nature. To purify that watery nature, He proposed to perform jala yagna. Therefore, He wanted to bathe in the Ganga River daily in Kashi. By this yogic exercise, all rivers in physical state will be sanctified. All sacred rivers will be rid of their impurities and will get sanctified. All great rivers like the Ganga River become polluted because of the sinful humans who are taking bath in them. When great persons, holy persons and embodiments of consciousness bathe in those rivers, the rivers will again become sanctified. The inner meaning of the jala yagna performed by Him is to purify the watery nature flowing in the form of fluid in the bodies of the living organisms. *By the mere movement of His hand, the divine emperor Srīpāda Srīvallabha creates, protects, and destroys millions and millions of universes. He is the real Lord Datta — an embodiment of the Trinity. In compliance with the promise given to Sage Bharadwaja in Treta Yuga[3], He incarnated in the lineage of Bharadwaja in the playful guise of a human being in the holy place Pīthikapuram where the Sāvitra Kāthaka Chayanam[4] was performed. The aim of His incarnation is to bless maha siddhas and maha yogis and uplift dharma through them. His promise to be born in the name of Narasimha Saraswati is true in every letter.*

"Those who doubt His divine promise and who ridicule the incarnation of Srīpāda will take birth as ghosts. He told many a time that the ghosts possess weak and unfortunate people and that He will grant relief to those ghosts in Gandharvanagar[5] in his form as Narasimha

1 The transcendental sound; the sound vibration of the Vedas
2 The physical Sun
3 The 2nd of the four yugas
4 A ritual to the Sun
5 Ganagapura; village in the Kalaburagi district of Karnataka, where Srī Narasimha Saraswati lived the last twenty years of His life

Saraswati. Those who doubt His divine sayings will go to hells such as Raurava[1].

"The book Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam written by you is a book where every letter of it is true. It will be translated into many languages. This great sacred hagiography confers abundant auspicious results to whoever devotedly reads it, regardless of the language it is read. The great Lord averred that He would elect worthy people to translate His Charitāmrutam and that during the time of translation also His special compassionate look will be on the translator. The Lord added that His mercy will be obtained even when this book is kept in the room of worship and worshipped there. And he also affirmed that in Kali Yuga,[2] it is possible to gain all auspicious developments by the pārāyana of this book. Therefore, it is only a lame excuse that you are writing this book. His auspicious lotus feet are making you write this book!"

I said, "Oh noble minded one, what you said is quite appropriate. I am not a scholar. Moreover, I do not have any knowledge of the Vedas and Vedantic subjects. It is a matter of great surprise and happiness to me that this great stupendous task is being carried out by this ignorant one."

For that, Srī Bhaskar Sastry remarked, *"Lord Datta's approach is like that. It is a customary sportive pastime for Him to cure diseases with prohibited materials, and to conduct extraordinary works through totally ignorant people. It is a divine pastime. That is His nature. It is a proof of His divine power.*

"Once a sanyasi came to the Kukkuteswara temple[3]. Srīpāda was a small child at that time. Srī Narasimha Varma and Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti took Srīpāda in a horse carriage to the Kukkuteswara temple. The sanyasi was in a state of meditation in the Kukkuteswara temple. Srīpāda suddenly questioned Srī Sreshti, 'Grandfather, why was this fisherman allowed to come here?' Srī Narasimha Varma said in a low voice, 'Kannayyā! It should not be said like that. He is a sanyasi and if angered, he can curse.' Srīpāda retorted, 'Can a fisherman also get angry? Is a person who emits stench of fish and who eats fish be called a sanyasi instead of a fisherman?'

1 The hell for humans who harm other living beings; the beings hurt by such a man take to the form of serpent-like beings and torture this person.
2 Dark age
3 Temple in Pithapuram mainly dedicated to Lord Shiva

Srīpāda had a tendency to incite people. In the meantime, the sanyasi opened his eyes. He observed that the foul odour of fish was coming from his body. He was a real sanyasi. He was thinking about the Lord's incarnation as fish. He was thinking whether any yogic meaning was there for the Lord's incarnation as fish. Then Srīpāda remarked, 'Swamī, there are tiny fish in your kamandalu[1]. See! How happily they are moving inside in different directions.'

Special grace to the sanyasi

"All this was very confusing to the sanyasi. Srīpāda looked intently into the eyes of the sanyasi. Then the sanyasi started looking inward. He acquired yogic vision and found that there were small cells in the blood vessels and in different liquids of the body and that they looked exactly like a fish. He understood that these tiny, tiny cells in the body engender different kinds of experiences. He realized that only these tiny cells in the shape of a fish caused the sense of smell to the nose. In the same way, very small cells that give the sense of taste were in the shape of a fish. He wondered, 'Oh, is this the incarnation of the Lord as a fish[2]?' He learnt that if one gets the knowledge about the very tiny cells that can identify the smell at the mūlādhāra[3], then he will get the power to control all odours in the world. He then got back his outward vision and smiled. Srīpāda also smiled. The sanyasi fell on the auspicious feet of Srīpāda. Srīpāda blessed him. Then a pleasant fragrance started spreading from the body of the sanyasi. The sanyasi understood that this was the yogic procedure employed by Sage Parāsara to change Matsya Gandhi as Yojana Gandhi. Fragrances emanate from the bodies of pativratas[4]. That is why they are called suvāsinis[5]. Srīpāda silently taught the sanyasi that when all experiences in the body are filled with fragrance, then the related physical changes also occur and spread fragrant smells. He is a divine player.

1 Small pot made of wood, earth, metal or dried pumpkin used by yogis or ascetics
2 Matsya Avatar of Vishnu
3 Base centre
4 Chaste, virtuous and pious wife
5 She who is sweet scented; married women

"Srīpāda said, 'You know about the incarnation of the fish. The incarnation of the tortoise[1] is the foundation for the divine nature and demoniac nature. Placing the Mandhara mountain on the back of the tortoise, devas and dānavās[2] churned the ocean. If you look inwards, you will become a great yogi, like the tortoise that hides its head in the shell. Else, if you turn outwards, you will amass all bad qualities and will become a demon. If you put your head out, someone will stab your head and you will die. If you do not want to die, you will have to look inward. Practise yoga. You need to get liberated from the bonds of karma.'"

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

1 Kurma Avatar of Vishnu
2 A race of demons

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 45

Instructing Srī Hanuman to Incarnate on Earth

Srīpāda's stay in Kashi

After we finished lunch in the house of Srī Bhaskar Sastry, he began to narrate. "My dears, the sportive pastimes of Srīpāda defy logic. He blessed many great people in Kashi. He granted them the required yogic powers and siddhis.

"He said to the groups of sages, 'I will take to another incarnation under the name of Narasimha Saraswati. There is a strong reason for My coming straight to Kashi after disappearing in Pīthikapuram. This is a great holy place. It is a seat for many siddhas. I will come daily, through yogic way, to take a bath in the Ganges River. I will receive an initiation into the order of sanyasi in My Narasimha Saraswati incarnation here only. I am ordering Shyama Charan[1] to be born here to teach kriya yoga[2] to the householders in the ensuing centuries. Hanuman will be the Brahma for the next yuga. I will send Hanuman to Shyama Charan to receive kriya yoga dīksha. This is true.'

Giving dārshan to Hanuman as Sita, Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrughna

"Then, He reached Badarika[3] Vanam, through the yogic way, along with the groups of rishis. He initiated many into kriya yoga dīksha in the Nara-Nārayana cave there. From there, He went to Urvasi Kunda[4] at a distance

1 Lahiri Mahasaya (Shyama Charan Lahiri, 1828-1895); a disciple of Mahāvatar Babaji and guru of Sri Yukteswar, the Guru of Yogananda
2 An ancient yoga technique
3 Badrinath; a holy place in the state Uttarakhand in India and an important pilgrimage centre
4 Island in the Brahmaputra River

of twelve kroshas[1]. He took a bath in the Rishi Ganga[2] also. He blessed a great yogi named Sarveswarānanda, who undertook penance for five thousand years. He went to Nepal from there. There, He granted dārshan to Hanuman, who was on a mountain, and in deep meditation of the name Rama, as Sita Rama Lakshmana Bharata Shatrughna[3]. He said to Hanuman, 'My dear Hanuman! It cannot be counted as to how many millions of times you have chanted the seed sound of fire[4] "Ram". You are reciting the seed sound of "Ram" even during every short moment. Chitragupta[5] is finding it difficult to keep your account. It is uncountable. Even during the grand infinite maha sūnya kāla, you chanted the seed sound "Ram" millions and millions of times. Therefore, you transcended time. You became Kālātmaka[6]. Chitragupta is at a loss to reckon your age as so many hundreds of thousands of years. You have to incarnate once in this Kali Yuga[7]. Since you are capable of pacifying the tendencies of senses, you will become famous with the name of "Sai".'

The efficacy of 'Ram' seed

"Hanuman said, 'My Lord! The 'Ram' seed sound is no doubt a fiery seed. It is also a fact that I won the favour of the fire god. It is also a fact that I became perfect through the union with fire. From the bodily point of view, I am Your servant. From the view of life force, I am Your part. From the viewpoint of ātma[8], I am You. Kindly tell in which form I should incarnate.' Srīpāda smiled and said, *'Even though you were born out of the divine origin of Shiva, you became a devotee of Rama. In the Arabic language, "Āl" means Shakti, "Āha" means Shāktha, i.e., one who holds Shakti. Therefore, "Allah" means the combined form of Shiva and Shakti.*

1 27 miles
2 River in Uttarakhand, northern India; tributary river to the Ganges
3 Names of Rama and his wife and brothers
4 Agni Bīja
5 Assistant of the Lord of Death, who keeps the records of deeds
6 Spirit of Time
7 Dark age
8 The self, the soul

You worshipped Me in the form of Janaki[1] *Vallabha. Henceforth, you will adore Me as Shiva-Shakti by uttering the name of "Allah," which is acceptable to Mlechhas*[2]*.'*

"Hanuman said, 'Lord! I know that Sage Bharadwaja conducted the Sāvitra Kāthaka Chayanam[3] in Pīthikapuram during Treta Yuga[4]. I also know that You are born in the lineage of Sage Bharadwaja, in compliance with the boon granted on that day. I do not want to be separated from You under any circumstances. Your lineage should be my lineage also. I am Your child.'

The dialogue between Srīpāda and Srī Hanuman

Srīpāda: 'My dear Hanumā! May the body that you assume be born in the Bharadwaja lineage.'

Hanuman: 'Allah Malik, that means, Allah is the Lord!'

Srīpāda embraced Hanuman and said, 'Hanuman! Abandon your bodily idea. You are a part of Me.'

Hanuman: 'Lord, I agree that I am a part of You. Nevertheless, amsa avatārs[5] merge with their original nature after completing their mission on Earth. Then those amsa avatārs lose all their value and importance. Therefore, the amsa avatār that I am going to take must be constantly connected with the original nature[6] and should possess all the wealth of strength and power that is present within You as the origin.'

Srīpāda: 'My dear Hanuman, you are very intelligent. May all the strength and supremacy of Mine flourish in you also. I will remain incognito in the body of Narasimha Saraswati in Kadali Vana[7] *for 300 years in yoga samadhi. Then I will become famous as Swamī Samartha in Prajna-*

1 Meaning descending from Janaka; name of Sita
2 People of foreign origin
3 A ritual to the Sun
4 The second of the four yugas
5 Partial manifestations
6 Here: Mūla Tattwa
7 Literally: forest of plantain trees; a cave located in the interior of a dense forest called Nallamala at the foot of the hill of SriSailam, Andhra Pradesh

pura[1]*. When the time comes for leaving My mortal body, I will incarnate into you who are in the form of Sai. I will announce unequivocally that My incarnation is within you. You will become famous as My Sarva Samartha Sadguru incarnation.'*

Hanuman: 'Lord! I am your servant from the standpoint of physical body. Therefore, I will move chanting the words "Allah Malik". From the view as a jīvātma, I will conduct myself in the form of a guru with a spark of your divinity, but is not Srī Charana Lord Datta Himself? Is it proper that there should be a difference between You and me? Nonduality will be accomplished only if I change as You, and You change as me. So kindly grant me absorption into the essential nature of Lord Datta.'

"Srīpāda Srīvallabha commanded Kāla Purusha[2] *to appear before Him. Kāla Purusha came and stood with folded hands. Then the great Lord ordered, 'Kāla Purusha, this Hanuman surpassed you and became a kālathītha*[3]*. I wish to grant him a state of union with Me. I am conferring him the title "Nādha" also. Henceforth, let him be called "Sai Nādha". I am deciding this day as Datta Jayanti*[4]*. The consciousness in Hanuman may be suitably transformed into Datta swarūpa.'*

"All the groups of saints looked towards the Lord with astonishment. In the meantime, all the living cells in the body of Hanuman exploded. Mother Anasuya emerged from them. She looked at Srīpāda and said, 'My dear Krishna Kannayyā, what a tricky child You are! Oh Datta, when I gave birth to You, naturally there would be labour pains. I thought that in the labour pains there would be a sort of sweetness. But You were born without any pain to me. Now You might have decided to give me that experience of labour pains. I now have severe pain in my abdomen. You are before me. Do You want to be born from my womb again? What is this? What a Vaishnavamāya[5] is this?'

Srīpāda: 'Mother, sons should fulfil the lawful wishes of their parents. Hanuman is in your womb. I am granting Him a state of oneness with Me. In a way, I am taking birth from your womb again through My own Māya.'

1 City of Akkalkot in Maharashtra
2 The divine Person of Time
3 One who transcended time
4 Birthday of Lord Dattatreya, celebrated on the full moon of the month of Margasira (Sagittarius)
5 Māya of Vishnu

"The labour pains increased after some time. Mother Anasuya gave birth to a charming form of Datta with three heads. After some time, that form disappeared and a small child was in her lap. Anasuya fed the newborn baby with her breast milk. After some time, this scene faded out. The form of Hanuman became visible. Only Janaki[1] and Rama stood before Hanuman.

Hanuman: 'My Lord! I will try to coordinate the good things in the Mlechha religion and the good things from the Sanātana Dharma[2]. There should be a Mlechha guru also.'

Srīpāda: 'A great wise man named Mahabūb Subhani is in Me. I will have him incarnated as Varish Alishah[3]. He will be your guru and will teach you the secrets of yoga. Shyama Charan[4] will teach you kriya yoga. If you want any other boons you can ask.'

The advent of Lord Mānikya

Hanuman: 'Lord, I heard that You, Padmavati and Venkateswara are indivisible. Therefore, grant me a Vaishnavaite guru who knows Your worship.'

Srīpāda: 'I will grant you the great Vishnu worshipper named Gopalarao[5] as your preceptor. He always remembers Me and is always merged with My consciousness. Being a devotee of Lord Venkateswara, he will be called Venkusa. After the fall of his body, keep his ash in an earthen pot and keep it buried under the earth. When you open the pot after receiving My suggestion, you will find the idol of Venkateswara. If you worship that idol, I will be pleased and will bestow boons.'

"Hanuman said to Mother Janaki, 'Mother! With love on this child, you gave me a diamond necklace. I broke it open to see whether the name of

1 A name of Sīta
2 The eternal Law
3 Waris Ali Shah (1819 - 7 April, 1905), Sufi saint from Dewa, Barabanki; founder of the Warsi order of Sufism
4 Lahiri Mahasaya (Shyama Charan Lahiri, 1828-1895); a disciple of Mahāvatar Babaji and Guru of Sri Yukteswar, the Guru of Yogananda
5 Also called Venkusa or Swamī Venkavadhūta; born in the early 19th century in a Brahmin family in the village Selu, Maharashtra

Rama was there anywhere in those diamonds. When I did not find the name of Rama, I threw away that necklace. Please pardon me for that great offence.'

Srīpāda: *'No action takes place without cause in the divine presence. I preserved that Mānikya Hāra. That necklace is also a form of Datta! Why doubt? I instilled life force to the Mānikya Hāra by means of the atma jyoti*[1] *in Me. Let this Mānikya Hāra flourish in the form of a guru. Let that guru form be called Lord Mānikya!'*

"My dear, Srīpāda Srīvallabha is the Narayana form in Badari[2]. He said that the sage named Nara will again incarnate on Earth. Srī Charana only knows with what name and form the incarnation will take place.

Srīpāda stays in Shambala Giri village in Dronagiri Mountain

"Once in Pīthikapuram Srī Venkavadhani, the maternal uncle of Srīpāda, was instructing children in Vedas. A coconut tree was close by. A monkey came to that holy place where the Vedas were being taught and was attentively listening to the Vedic sounds. Without spoiling the coconuts on the trees or any other objects, the monkey carefully listened to the sound of the Vedas. Srīpāda questioned His uncle, 'Uncle, are there incarnations for the coconut tree just as God has incarnations?' The maternal uncle said, 'Kannayyā! What sort of question is this? There must be some sense in questioning.' Srīpāda remarked, 'Uncle, that is not the point! From the tree, an unripe fruit is grown. That fruit or nut is again becoming the tree. That tree is again becoming the unripe fruit. As the process goes on like this, the tree will turn into the form of the seed and the fruit in turn will be developing into a tree.' The conversation ended there. Suddenly, a big coconut fell from the coconut tree that was close by. Srīpāda took the coconut into His hands. Looking towards the monkey, He said, 'I do not wish to send you with empty hands. I am giving this with My hands as prasād to you. You should not ask for another coconut from My hands. You can take it if you agree.' The monkey moved its head as a token of assent. Srīpāda

1 The light of the Self

2 Badrinath; a holy place in the state Uttarakhand in India and an important pilgrimage centre

gave the coconut with His hands and stroked all over its body with love. It went away very happily. Who knows who really that monkey was, why the coconut was given, and why the coconut fell on the ground without effort? His playful actions are very strange, and beyond imagination.

"The great Lord went to the Sanjīvini Mountain, which is called Dronagiri[1]. He spent some days there with the groups of sages. Who knows what He bestowed to the great yogis there? Then He went to Shambala village where Lord Kalki would incarnate. That place is in an area that cannot be visited even by maha yogis. Great persons who have been performing penance in the Himalayas for thousands of years reside there. *Srīpāda drank pure water in the crystal mountain in Shambala village. The age of those who drink that water stands still. Therefore, from that time, He remained as a boy of sixteen years without any changes in the body.*

The ascent of Srīpāda to heavenly worlds from the area of Gokarna

"Afterwards, He travelled through many holy places blessing devotees and maharshis. He reached Gokarna kshetra[2]. Srīpāda stayed in Gokarna kshetra for three years. It is a great pilgrimage centre. There, He displayed many divine līlas. They were innumerable. He enjoys the playful pastimes every moment. From there, He reached SrīShaila. *In SrīShaila, Srī Bāpanārya conducted a great yagna in the past and imparted power from the solar region to the Mallikarjuna linga*[3]*. Only on account of that, the incarnation of Srīpāda Srīvallabha took place.* From there, He went to the solar region through the yogic path with His body, which was like a blazing ball of fire. From there He went to the Dhruva[4] and from there to the Ārdra star[5]. He returned to SrīShaila from the Ārdra star after four months. He organized a conference of siddha purushas in SrīShaila at the

1 Dunagiri; area in the Himalaya in the Almora-District, Uttarakhand
2 A temple town on the western coast of India in the state of Karnataka
3 Srī Bāpanārya had channelled the energy of the Sun with a special ritual into a Shiva linga at SriSailam called SrīSaila Mallikarjuna lingam, making it a powerful deity in that area.
4 Polar Star
5 Nakshatra constellation in Gemini with the star Betelgeuse

request of the maharshis from the Ārdra star. A new, divine yoga of knowledge was formulated and was preached by Him in that conference. He sent back the siddha purushas to the Ārdra star. His programme is incomprehensible. He is the sole emperor for many millions of universes. After some time, He reached a divine place called Kurungadda."

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 46

Visiting the House of Srī Dhana Gupta

Appearance of mantrākshatas on the Srī Pādukas given to Srī Bhaskar Sastry

We were about to take permission from Srī Bhaskar Sastry and leave the place. Srī Bhaskar Sastry went into meditation for some time. We had already handed over the pādukas[1] of Srīpāda to Srī Bhaskar Sastry. He had placed them in his puja room. Mantrākshatas[2] began to appear on those pādukas. We wondered at that miracle. Srī Bhaskar Sastry said, *"Dear Sirs, the divine diversions of Srīpāda are inexplicable. The birth star of Mother Padmavati is Mrigasira[3]. The birth star of Srī Venkateswara is Sravana. The Uttara Phalguni[4] star is a friendly star to Srīmāta[5], and it is a very friendly star to Srī Venkateswara. Therefore, their divine marriage took place during the Uttara Phalguni star. My dear ones, today is also Uttara Phalguni star. By the appearance of mantrākshatas on the pādukas of Srīpāda Srīvallabha on this day of the divine star Uttara Phalguni, Srīpāda made it known that He is verily the form of Padmavati-Venkateswara. Therefore, keep these divine mantrākshatas with you. You will get auspiciousness! May the grace of Srī Charan always be on you."*

1 Sandals worshipped as holy
2 Rice mixed with turmeric and charged with incantations
3 Nakshatra constellation in the month of Taurus-Gemini
4 Nakshatra constellation in the month Leo-Virgo
5 I. e. Padmavati

Various holy places visited by Shankar Bhatt and Dharma Gupta in their peregrinations

What a great fortune! We felt that He was observing every movement, every thought and every action of ours. We travelled for some distance on a bullock cart. That bullock cart belonged to a marriage entourage. Then we travelled in a horse carriage of some prominent Vaishyas. They were going to Kondavīdu[1]. Srī Dhana Gupta, a prominent Vaishya said, "Dear ones, today is a great auspicious day for us. You gave mantrākshatas of Srīpāda to the marriage entourage travelling on a bullock cart. After that, you gave them to us. Once, I went to Pīthikapuram for the purpose of business. I had the dārshan of Srīpāda in the house of Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti. Then Srīpāda said to me with love, "I will give you mantrākshatas with My blessings in connection with the marriage of your son. You give eleven varahās as dakshina[2] to the poor Brahmin through whom those mantrākshatas will be handed to you. A prominent Vaishya will also come along with him. Promise him to give your daughter in marriage to his son. Give him a hundred varahās and celebrate the confirmation of marriage in Kondavīdu by exchanging betel in a betrothal ceremony."

Neither I nor Srī Dharma Gupta had any money with us. We reached Kondavīdu. The marriage of the son of Srī Dhana Gupta was celebrated on a grand scale in Kondavīdu. Srī Dharma Gupta was a distant relative to the family of the bride. The family of Srī Dharma Gupta was invited to the marriage. Nobody in his family knew about the whereabouts or the time of return of Srī Dharma Gupta.

The family members of Srī Dharma Gupta arrived at the house of the parents of the daughter-in-law of Srī Dhana Gupta. Srī Dharma Gupta's son also came for the marriage. The betrothal ceremony for the marriage between Srī Dharma Gupta's son and Srī Dhana Gupta's daughter took place in Kondavīdu. I, who had no money till then, received eleven varahās. Srī Dharma Gupta, who was penniless up to that time, got one hundred varahās. Oh, what a wonderful turn of events!

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1 Kondavīdu; village in the Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh
2 Monetary offering

Srī Dharma Gupta had acquaintance with some important traders connected with a diamond business. They wanted to stay in Kondavīdu for some time to confirm the sale and purchase transactions relating to it. It was said that Lord Datta wanders in disguise in the Kondavīdu region. There also lived Ambika yogis, Shiva yogis and alchemists.

It was decided to send me to Vijayawatika[1] in a horse carriage. I reached Vijayawatika. I was provided accommodation in the house of Srī Dhana Gupta's relatives. The Krishna River flows in that great place. There was a temple of Srī Kanaka Durga Malleswara Swamī. I bathed in the Krishna River and visited the temple. I came across an old sanyasi in the temple of Mother Durga. He had a strong desire to go to Pīthikapuram and visit Srīpāda.

Both of us started from Vijayawada and arrived at Rajamahendravaram[2] after some days of journey. We visited Markandeswara and Koti Lingeswara temples there. Our journey was going on very comfortably. I told the old sanyasi with me, "We will reach Pīthikapuram in a few days. We will visit the house where Srīpāda incarnated. We will meet Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti and Srī Narasimha Varma. We will receive the blessings of Srī Bāpanārya. We will meet mother Sumatī Maharani and father Appalaraja Sarma. An excellent prosperous time is approaching us. This is an auspicious time when successive auspicious events happen. After that, we will go from Pīthikapuram to Kurungadda and have the dārshan of Srīpāda Srīvallabha."

The sanyasi was in a rapturous mood. We were visiting temples located on the way. We reached Pīthikapuram in a few days. Boarding and lodging facilities were arranged for us in the house of Srī Bāpanārya. There, we heard many childhood līlas[3] of Srīpāda. We learnt that the Brahmins at Pīthikapuram also were starting to understand the nature of Srīpāda little by little. How many līlas of Srīpāda can I describe? It is not possible even for thousand tongued Ādi Sesha[4] to describe all His līlas. It is only to illustrate the magnitude of His līlas that I am including a few of them in the book.

1 Today: Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh
2 Today: Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh
3 Sportive plays
4 The serpent of time carrying all the beings of creation

The journey of Srīpāda's relatives to Kurungadda

Srī Narasimha Varma and his wife Ammajamma wanted to go to Kurungadda and see Srīpāda. They submitted the matter to Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti. He also agreed. The matter was broached with Srī Bāpanārya. He also had a desire to see his grandson physically. Sumatī Maharani asked us about the welfare of her child in every detail. Although Srī Appalaraja Sarma appeared to be stern, inwardly he too desired to see his child once.

The journey to Kurungadda was decided upon. Eighteen horse carriages were specially arranged for the travel. All of us travelled together to Kurungadda. All of us thought that the journey might take many days, but since the journey was confirmed, we all felt that some days soon we will certainly have the dārshan of Srīpāda. Sumatī Maharani was shedding tears wondering when she could see her little lad. All people were consoling her with courageous words of confidence.

Srīpāda giving dārshan again to His parents and grandfathers

The omniscient one, the director of the world drama, Great Lord Srīpāda Srīvallabha, was observing all the activity going on there. Suddenly, all the people travelling in the eighteen horse carriages fell into stupor. The people driving the carriages also swayed with intoxication. The horses appeared to be running in the sky instead of on the ground.

We started from Pīthikapuram at the time of sunrise. It was getting midday. The people who drove the carriages told us that we missed the correct route and that we were in an unknown area. I also got down from the carriage and probed around to know which area it was. Then we questioned the travellers there about the name of the village. They informed us that it was Panchadeva Pahād. They added, "Today is Thursday. Therefore, we came to the darbar of Srīpāda. He is inquiring about the welfare of all those who approach Him and remedying their worries and diseases. All the visitors are served with plenty of food." We were confused whether it was a dream or a reality. We were unable to understand, in whatever way we all thought, how it was possible to reach Panchadeva Pahād in such a short time.

It was confirmed that it was a reality and not a dream. Srīpāda's mother Sumatī Maharani embraced Him and wept. Srīpāda said, "Mother, you are very privileged for giving birth to a child who is attributeless and formless, the supreme phenomenon. You are a pativrata siromani[1] equal to Mother Anasuya. Will crops grow in the land where you shed tears?" Questioning like this, He wiped the tears of His mother with His divine hands.

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

1 Crest jewel among devoted wives

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 47

Srīpāda Brings His Parents and Followers from Pīthikapuram to Panchadeva Pahād

Srīpāda grants anyone only after evaluating and measuring the dharma against deeds.

In the darbar[1] of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, plenty of sumptuous meals were served. It was a wonder that the quantity of heaps of food were never exhausted, in spite of being served on a large scale. The remaining rice, curries and other food items were thrown into the Krishna River on the instructions of the great Lord. The prasād[2] of Srīpāda was handed to the creatures in the water.

Srīpāda said to Srī Bāpanārya, "Grandfather, you transmitted power from the solar region into SrīShaila. In Treta Yuga[3], under the able guidance of Sage Bharadwaja, all the sages performed Sāvitra Kāthaka Chayanam[4] in Pīthikapuram, praying eagerly for My incarnation. To fulfil the promise given to them, I had to come. You declare ardently that the form of Brahman cannot be comprehended by word or mind and that there is nothing that is impossible for Lord Datta. I can stretch time and space. I can shrink them. My will shall be done. Nothing can deter it. When I feel it is necessary, I can join both sky and earth. The celestial bodies in the sky are like balls in My hand.

Srī Bāpanārya, I granted you grace when you were born as Lābhāda Maharshi[5], as Nanda and as Bhaskarācharya[6]. Now, when you came as Srī

1 Royal court
2 Food given as an offering
3 The 2nd of the four yugas
4 A ritual to the Sun
5 A muni (monk) from the Vaishya community of an earlier Yuga, now born as Srī Bāpanāryulu, the father of Sumatī Maharani and the grandfather of Srīpāda Srīvallabha
6 The spiritual guru of the Ārya Vaishya community in the Brihat Sila Kingdom

Bāpannāvadhani, I came as Srīpāda Srīvallabha. There is nothing to wonder about it."

Then Srī Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti said, "*Golden lad, for you everything is very ordinary, but for us everything is extraordinary and inconceivable.*"

Srīpāda remarked, "Grandfather, I am a very skillful sheriff. What is due to each one is granted accurately to them after evaluating and measuring carefully their dharma and karmas. A small ray emanating from Me can become a great yogi or a great siddha. This Earth cannot endure even that small ray. You cannot bear even the small ray with the small quantity of kundalini given to you. Therefore, I conceal Myself in Māya. If I feel it is necessary, I can exhibit any extraordinary miracle. There is no load that I cannot lift. There is no problem that I cannot solve. There are no boons that I cannot offer. There is no work that I cannot perform. The intention of bringing you from Pīthikapuram in this way is to make you aware that I am Datta."

Srī Narasimha Varma said, "You are the only Kshatriya protecting all people. All others are Kshatriyas by name only." Srīpāda said, "The nature of rulers is always in Me. I am commanding you to take birth in Maharashtra under the name of Shivaji Maharaja[1] and protect sanātana dharma[2]." Then Srī Narasimha Varma hailed, "Victory, victory unto Srīpāda Sārvabhūma[3]."

Srimati Ammajamma said, "My dear one, golden lad! We are hoping very much to see your marriage with our own eyes. I want to see that your marriage is celebrated with all pomp. I want to decorate you with the auspicious marriage mark and see you as a bridegroom." Srīpāda said, "Grandmother, definitely let it be so! I will incarnate as Kalki in the Shambala village and will marry Anaghā Lakshmi born as Padmavati in Simhalam[4] for the sake of the weal of the world. For that, there is still some time. I will surely fulfil your wish. *Note that the end of Kali Yuga*[5]

1 A great Indian warrior king (1627/30 – 1680)
2 The eternal Law
3 The Emperor
4 Srī Lanka
5 Dark age

will be indicated by the time when a new Ayyappa[1] *does not visit Sabarimala*[2]. I, who incarnated as Dharma Sāstha, should not violate My word, isn't it? You will have to wait for some time."

The sportive play of the unseen puller of strings in the world drama

Srimati Venkata Subbamamba said, "Kannayyā, many days passed since you tasted milk, curd, cream and butter. I want to feed you with my hands." *Then Srīpāda said, "Grandmother, surely you feed Me. I am very tired. I know that you are bringing milk, curd, cream and butter with you. Will they not get spoilt in a journey of so many days? I became a prisoner to the affection and love of all of you and brought you here through a strange method so that those items will not be spoilt. Grandmother! See how much I had to struggle. Is it an ordinary thing for a single person to drag eighteen horse carriages over a distance of many miles? All My body is aching. See how My hands developed blisters." Then she examined the hands of Srīpāda and was astonished. The hands of Srī Charan really developed blisters. Venkata Subbamamba applied cream to His hands. Hot water fomentation was also done. Where is the end to the sportive pastimes of the director of the world drama?*

Srimati Rajamamba said, "Golden lad, I brought your favourite halwa[3] in your silver casket. Come near! My dear, I will feed you with my hands." All the three grandmothers together fed the halwa to Srīpāda. The halwa did not exhaust even though it was drawn out many a time. Srīpāda allowed this pastime to happen for a very long time.

Srīpāda asked, "All three grandmothers may have a lot of love towards Me. If I eat so much halwa alone will I not become sick? Are you doing the correct thing?" After questioning like that, He fed halwa with His own hands to His brothers, sisters and their husbands. There was a cultivator named Venkayya among the visitors. Srīpāda gave Datta dīkshas in his

1 Ayyappa is Dharma Sāsta, born out of the union of Shiva and the female Mohini form of Vishnu
2 Sabarimala, the "Hill of Sabari" in the Western Ghats; birthplace of Lord Ayyappa
3 Sweet preparation with wheat flour

house only. He gave halwa with His hands to Venkayya and instructed him to give halwa to the carriage drivers and to the horses. He presented the silver casket to Venkayya.

Srī Appalaraja Sarma prayed, "My dear son! My golden one! If we committed any offences not knowing that you are Lord Datta, pray pardon us." Srīpāda said, "Father, I am your son. Can the son pardon his father? What a wonder! You should shower affection on Me, who is your son. Always desire My welfare."

Srī Venkavadhani and his wife were weeping bitterly. Then Srīpāda said, "Uncle, our relationship is permanent. I am not a nephew for you alone. Everyone who is born in your family can regard Me as his nephew. I will regale you with My divine līlas. You can satisfy all your longings at the time of Kalki incarnation by treating Padmavati Devi as your daughter."

Grief overwhelmed Sumatī Maharani. It became unbearable for her that her wish to decorate Him with the auspicious kalyanam[1] mark and see Him as a bridegroom was not satisfied. On the other hand, Her son was seen as a sage and was indifferent to the pleasures of senses. All this was unbearable to her. Then Srīpāda came near to His mother and gave assurance saying "Mother, you are not different from Mother Anasuya to Me. I will definitely fulfil your wishes in the incarnation of Kalki.

"Mother, I became so great only because I was born from your womb. I was nourished with the nectar of your affection. Mother, have you noticed what Vasavī has done? When I was hungry, I turned into an infant child and approached Mother Anasuya to drink her breast milk, but Vasavī drank all the milk. Then the sister said, 'Brother, You go to Mother Sumatī and drink milk. If You delay, I will drink that milk also.' Thus, she warned Me. You tell Me what I should do, Mother." Saying so, Srīpāda turned into a small baby. He lay on the hard ground and looked at His mother pitifully. Sorrow overwhelmed Sumatī Maharani. She held the baby in her hands and gave breast milk. She called out, "Daughter, Vasavī!" A small female baby aged few months appeared on the floor. Both of the children drank the breast-milk from either side. All the grief of Mother Sumatī shattered.

Venkayya said, "Here is a prayer to Srī Maha Guru. This darbar place and the adjoining large land where this divine līla took place should be-

1 Marriage mark

come famous in the whole universe." Srīpāda said, "My darbar will be constructed as a permanent building in the future. Cows will also be there in it. I will demonstrate many of My miracles there."

This is an experience that I witnessed with my very eyes. Whatever I wrote here is true in each letter. All the guests there fell into a sort of sleeping intoxication. In a short while, there was none in the darbar except the sanyasi, Srīpāda and I. I was worried as to what happened to all others. I had a doubt whether they became victims to devilish witchcraft.

Srīpāda said, "No conjuring of demons works in My presence. I returned all the guests safely to Pīthikapuram. I will redeem the people in the same way in which they adore Me. This is My vow."

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 48

Description of the Darbar in Panchadeva Pahād

How Srīpāda addresses men and women

Srīpāda generally used to hold darbar in Panchadeva Pahād on every Thursday. He used to walk over the waters of the Krishna River. Wherever He put His foot on the water, a lotus would appear there. It is beyond human imagination as to how wooden sandals stood on a lotus. Not only that. Walking on water is a wonder. For some time, it used to be a wonder to the onlookers. After some time, it was considered as a proverbial activity. When Srīpāda arrived at the other bank of Krishna, His devotees were cordially inviting Him. The darbar used to continue till evening. After that, when He was crossing the Krishna River, He used to walk on the lotus flowers that emerged from the water in the morning at His steps. Then all devotees used to bid farewell. During the nights, He used to be in Kurungadda alone. Every Friday, He used to give turmeric bits to the girls who wanted to be married and to the ladies who desired auspicious married life.

He used to address elderly ladies as Mother Sumatī. Sometimes, He used to address them as Mother Anasuyamma. He was addressing women younger than Him as Ammā Vasavī or Ammā Srī Vidyādhara, or Ammā Radhā or Ammā Surekhā. He used to call elders who were of the age of His father as ayyā or nāyanā. He used to call young boys as Orey Abbī or bangārū. He used to address those who were of the age of His grandfather as tātā. In the case of such elderly ladies, He used to fondly call them as ammammā.

Daily programme of Srīpāda and darbar

He used to hold the Friday darbar sometimes in Kurungadda and sometimes in Panchadeva Pahād. In the same way, the darbar on Thursday was held either in Kurungadda or in Panchadeva Pahād. It depended on His liking.

During the darbar on Sunday, he used to deliver a lecture on the esoteric yogic vidya. After that He used to inquire about the welfare of the visitors. He used to patiently hear their difficulties and grant assurances. In the Monday darbar, He used to tell episodes from the Purānas. After the discourse, He used to inquire about the welfare of the devotees. In the Tuesday darbar, He used to teach about Upanishads. After the teaching, He used to listen to individual problems and suggesting solutions and in the same manner, granting them assurance. In the Wednesday darbar, He used to explain the Vedas and the meaning of the Vedas. Afterwards, He used to patiently hear the woes of devotees and used to grant assurances. In the Thursday darbar, He used to explain about guru tattwa[1]. In this darbar, there was also remedying of worries and chronic diseases of devotees and granting them assurance of protection. On that day, meals used to be specially prepared and served to all people. When love for devotees swelled in Him, He used to personally serve food to them. For some fortunate people, He used to personally feed them. For some people who were very shy, He used to forcibly push food into their mouths and make them eat. He said that His treasure was always full and that there would never be dearth of money or food. In the Friday darbar, He used to teach about srī vidya[2]. *He used to invariably distribute turmeric bits. In the darbar on Saturday, He used to teach about the greatness of the worship of Shiva.*

Those who saw the darbar of Srīpāda were indeed fortunate. Devotees used to bring rice, vegetables, jowar[3] and rāgi grains[4]. Every day there used to be a feast of food, but on Thursdays, special preparations used to be made. Some sweet used to be prepared and distributed to the devotees. The heart of Srīpāda was very tender. If anyone with troubles came to the darbar, he used to go out happily after the redressal of those troubles. *Srīpāda used to say that His grace would surely be granted if Srī Datta Purāna is read. The love of Srīpāda is that of millions of mothers.*

He used to not allow anybody to stay in Kurungadda during nights, but He permitted the old sanyasi, who came with me, to stay for some days. At times, I was asked to stay in Kurungadda during the night. He told the

1 Philosophy relating to guru
2 The knowledge of Srī, the divine Mother
3 Sorghum; a genus of plants in the grass family grown for grain
4 Finger millet (Eleusine coracana), cereal

old sanyasi to go to Kashi to live and leave the body there only. My duty was to clean the cooking utensils, prepare meals and to look after the comforts of devotees. Meals should be provided at any time to visitors of the darbar. If someone said that he had already eaten, He would insist on eating again as it was prasād. If I said that the food was insufficient and that the guests were more in number, He used to sprinkle the water from His kamandalu[1] on the food items. The items of food used to become inexhaustible. It happened like that many times.

During night times, celestials used to come in aircrafts to Kurungadda and worship the great guru. They used to go back after obtaining His blessings. Sometimes yogis from the Himalayas used to come. They also used to come by walking on the waters of the Krishna River. Their bodies were effulgent. Srīpāda used to personally serve them food.

The meal of Srīpāda consisted only of a fistful of cooked rice grains. He said that He would be very satisfied if His devotees take meals belly-full, irrespective of whether it was food made of rice or jowar or rāgi porridge or pudding.

A washerman named Ravi Das had the great fortune of washing the clothes of Srī Charan. Even after having His dārshan, if someone had not discarded his bad habits, he would get strange problems. To remove them, he would have to come to Srīpāda again. Srīpāda used to tell that obsequious ceremonies should be compulsorily performed for the departed elders. He said that all the eighteen castes were His children; that He had no partiality for anyone and that He grants results according to the dharma karmas followed by people. *He used to also remark that the great opportunity available that day would not be available again and that He would behave strictly in the ensuing incarnation. He used to also observe that His dārshan would be available as a result of the merit earned in many births, and that the good opportunity available should be utilized or else one would get the dārshan of a sadguru only after many births. He used to also say that in the entire world, 125,000 siddha purushas exist in any yuga and that all of them were His segments and if one takes refuge in anyone among them, His grace emanates through them.*

1 Small pot made of wood, earth, metal or dried pumpkin used by yogis or ascetics

He also added that He is the support for all Creation and by His will only creation, sustenance and liquidation of Creation happens. Srīpāda used to say, "If you salute your guru, he salutes his guru and in this way all these salutations will reach Me only, being the first guru. If gods become angry, the guru will protect, but if the guru becomes angry, there is none to protect." He further remarked that benefits of this and the other worlds would be gained by those who worship Him and that no one should be hated in the Creation, and when we hate anyone, it will also reach Him.

He also averred that if He wishes to grace, He will not notice even the merits and demerits, but one should have sāttwic qualities in him to get His grace.

Chanting the name of God in the heart activities should be performed

It was also remarked that Kurungadda is a supreme sacred kshetra and that in Iswara[1] there is an awakened one and that deities, sages and great persons live there in disguise without being seen by people. There is a suitable place for everyone. *He asserted that God's name should be retained in the heart at all times while discharging duties, and that those duties should be in accordance with dharma. He also observed that on getting His dārshan, all the great sins would be removed and if one follows pious activities it would be possible to derive auspicious results. Let us follow the divine sayings of Srīpāda in our life and be redeemed!*

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

1 The indwelling God

Chapter 49

Srīpāda's Methods of Destroying Karma

The significance of number 33. His programmes in Kurungadda

Once Srīpāda said, "Shankar Bhatt, what we practise is agni vidya[1]. Worshipping fire is the natural trait of an orthodox person. Your worship of fire lies in igniting the stove and preparing the meal." I said to Srīpāda, "Blessed be Srī Maha Guru! This earthen kitchen trench stove should continue to burn like this even after my exit." Srīpāda replied, "The fire in your stove has no power of its own. Since it merged with My yogic fire, the meals you prepare on this stove are turning into a prasād and are removing the misery and humiliation of devotees. This stove should be there only for nine more years. It implies that I will conceal My body during My thirtieth year. After that, I will grant a vision in a lustrous form for three more years to devoted persons. It would then be thirty-three years for Me. The thirty-third year brings many changes in the life of a yogi. The vertebrae in the spine are also only thirty-three. The number of Rudra Ganas[2] is also thirty-three crores[3]. The fire sacrifice will continue even after that. I am performing this fire worship as a symbol of burning karma brought to the gross level. However, the karma of devotees will be in the subtle forms before they assume the gross forms. Prior to that, they are attached to the kārana body in the kārana form[4]. Therefore, after the thirty-third year, this kind of fire worship is unnecessary for Me. I will then burn the sins attached to the subtle bodies or kārana bodies of those who depend on Me by My yogic fire. You can continue burning the kitchen stove till I attain the thirtieth year. Afterwards, devotees will come here, cook their own food and will leave. That will go on for three years. Afterwards, the fire worship in the

1 The wisdom of fire
2 Troops of Rudras; attendants of Shiva
3 Indian number; a crore corresponds to ten millions.
4 Causal body; causal form

physical form is not needed. I started pruthvi yagna[1]. It is happening successfully. I commenced jala yagna[2]. It is also going on with grand success. I now started fire worship as fire yagna[3]. This will also continue without any hindrances. I am the one who is the form of fire in all living creatures! I am the one who sanctifies all things! I am the one who burns all things!"

I did not hear about the sacrificial rituals relating to the five basic elements till then. I came to the conclusion that it is not appropriate to analyze the sportive procedures of Srīpāda.

One day, a newly married couple came to visit Srīpāda. He ordered them to stay in His darbar hall in Panchadeva Pahād. After two days, the young man died. They believed that Srī Maha Guru would save them and that He was a benign God who grants many boons. But the new bride now got widowship, which is unbearable to any woman. The relatives of the newly wedded couple came to Panchadeva Pahād. They were in a dilemma whether to cremate the corpse or not. It was not possible to take away the dead body from the darbar in Panchadeva Pahād without the permission of Srīpāda. The new bride looked like a deity of grief. Srīpāda came to His darbar. The new bride submitted her misfortune to Him. Srīpāda remarked that the results of karma were unavoidable. Then that new bride submitted, "If the inert karma has really the power to grant death to my husband, it is better to accord the status of a deity to karma and worship it by constructing temples. I heard that for Srīpāda, who is the personification of consciousness, who wears robes of fire, who is an embodiment of fire, there are no impossibilities. Kindly grant this unfortunate one māngalya bhiksha[4] and gratify." That newly wedded bride had immense faith on the mercy and compassion of Srīpāda.

Granting life to the dead

Then Srīpāda said, "Belief gives results. If you have such strong faith in Me, then your husband will surely become alive. I will tell you a way out

1 Sacrifice of earth
2 Water sacrifice
3 Fire sacrifice
4 Gift of being married

without transgressing the rule of karma. Sell your mangala sūtra[1] and with that money purchase firewood that equals the weight of your husband. Bring that firewood here. The firewood will be used in the stove for cooking food. With that, your inauspiciousness will be burnt away. The inauspiciousness of losing your māngalya, the inauspiciousness of your husband's body being burnt, and the inauspiciousness of the food cooked by burning the firewood that attracted death vibrations will all get neutralized." After following Srīpāda's instructions, her husband came back to life.

Srīpāda used to attract various types of sinful activities of His devotees into the firewood. Those firewood sticks used to be burnt and delicious food used to be prepared, thereby giving blessed auspicious results to the devotees.

Great grace on a poor Brahmin

On another occasion, a poor Brahmin came to have dārshan of Srīpāda. He wailed that if Srīpāda did not show grace on him, he had no other option except suicide. Then Srīpāda brought a burning stick and touched the Brahmin with it. The Brahmin suffered intense pain for a very long time. Srīpāda said to him, "Oh Brahmin, you wanted to commit suicide. If I had ignored you, you would have really committed suicide. I destroyed all the vibrations of sinful karma related to suicide by branding you with fire. From now on, you will not suffer from penury. Take this cooled firewood stick, wrap it in your towel and carry it carefully to your house". He did like that. When he opened the towel in his house, the firewood stick turned into gold. That Brahmin's poverty was thus removed.

Srīpāda used to destroy the sins of His devotees in strange ways through the fire ritual. At times, He used to ask them to bring special vegetables like eggplants or lady fingers. He used to attract the reactions of sinful acts of the devotees into those vegetables. He used to make the devotees compulsorily eat the curry made from those vegetables. The afflictions of karma thus used to be removed.

1 A thread that the groom ties around the bride's neck during the marriage

A girl did not get married even though she attained puberty. Noticing that she had adverse effects of Mars, she was asked to bring red gram grains. Meals were prepared with those red grams and He instructed all, including the girl, to eat the meals. When the shackles of karma were removed in this way, she got married to a worthy bridegroom.

Some used to be instructed to bring cows' ghī for the food preparations in darbar. Some others used to be asked to light lamps with cows' ghī. In case of very difficult situations or in cases of unwed girls, He used to advise them to conduct the worship of Ambika during the time of Rāhu[1] on Fridays.

Once a devotee became sick and was bed-ridden. Srīpāda instructed that a lamp with castor oil should be lighted and kept in his bedroom. He also commanded that oil should be poured into the lamp to see that it was not extinguished under any circumstances during the night. When it was done like that, the devotee was freed from disease.

One devotee was in a state of extreme misfortune. Then Srīpāda told that if a lamp with cows' ghī was kept shining for one week without break, the potency or influence of Lakshmi would re-enter the house. He used to release His dependants from sinful actions through many novel methods such as those mentioned above. It is not possible for human beings to know all these methods.

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

1 The North Node, regarded as a planet; the Rāhu time is calculated as per sunrise and sunset; the Friday Rāhu time is approx. 10:30 – 12:00 am with a sunrise at 6 am.

Chapter 50

Relief from Poverty and Other Afflictions

The efficacy of chanting of the name

Once Srīpāda Srīvallabha said to me, "Shankar Bhatt, after the Agni yagna, Vāyu yagna is important. I am going to start Vāyu yagna also."

I did not know what Vāyu yagna was. An old Brahmin came to Kurungadda with stomach colic. He was suffering greatly. He said that it would be better to die by committing suicide than to endure that intense pain.

Then Srīpāda said, "In your previous birth, you hurt many with your piercing words. You offended them with your prickly and disgusting words. As a result, you have this unfortunate disease now. *In Kali Yuga, there is no greater cure to remove the effect of rude talk than chanting the name of God.* By this, all the Vāyu mandala[1] will be purified. I am initiating this grand yagna called nāma smarana[2] in Kurungadda. I am going to control the four forms of speech parā, pasyanti, madhyama and vaikhari[3] at the yogic level. *Whoever it may be, if he sincerely chants My name 'Srīpāda Vallabha Digambarā, Datta Digambarā' I will be easily accessible to them and will bring all auspicious developments."*

As directed by Srīpada, the name 'Srīpāda Srīvallabha Digambara' was continuously chanted for three nights and three days. Srīpāda gave permission to stay in Kurungadda during the night for those three nights. The stomach colic of the old Brahmin got cured after three days and three nights.

Srīpāda said, "The entire ethereal region is filled today with the wrongly used verbiage. When a person utters a word, he typically provokes one of the three attributes — sattwa, rajas or tamas[4] — or two of these attributes or all three attributes. Since the provocation of attrib-

1 Airy region
2 Chanting the name of God with devotion
3 The stages of the Word as spoken word, thought, idea and beyond manifestation
4 The qualities of poise, dynamism and inertia

utes does not lead to welfare, the provocation exerts a malefic influence on earth, air, fire, water and sky. Since these five elements are polluted, everything related is polluted and the mind, body and the inner-self of man also get polluted. Consequently, he is doing bad karma and as a result, he is becoming poor. On account of the poverty, he again commits sins. Since he is involved in sinful acts, his mind becomes vile and he is unable to perform virtuous deeds such as giving donations. From that, he is again condemned to poverty.

Need for purity of thought, speech and action

"If a man wants to get rid of the pangs of poverty or get released from sinful acts, he must have purity of mind, speech and action. This is called trikarana suddhi. Whatever is thought in the mind should be aligned with his speech, and whatever is conveyed in his speech, it should be aligned with action. A person who attains trikarana suddhi becomes a great person.

"If there is a variation between thought, speech and action, it is the absence of trikarana suddhi. Then he becomes a bad person. There are many ways in this Kali Yuga to get salvation. Chanting the name of God is the easiest one among all the ways. When the sacred name of God gets accustomed to the tongue, the habit of speaking sacred words develops. If the mind is concentrated on God while chanting the name of God, the mind also gets sanctified. Through this, one gets motivated to perform virtuous deeds."

Release from karma

Once a tuberculosis patient came to Kuruvapuram. He had also diabetes. In addition, he had some more disorders as well. On seeing him, the great Lord was very angry and said, "This person was a dacoit in the previous birth. He robbed money from many innocent people and put them into troubles. He stole the money from a person who saved money for the marriage of his daughter. Since the money was lost, the father could not perform the marriage of his daughter. He was banished from his caste be-

cause he could not perform the marriage of his daughter in time. Since he could not offer a dowry, suitable alliances were not forthcoming for his daughter. Only aged bridegrooms were available. Then the girl committed suicide and lost her life. A life that should have run for full hundred years turned into ashes."

The tuberculosis patient sought refuge of Srī Charan with utmost anguish. The kind hearted Srī Charan asked him to sleep in the cow barn of the darbar in Panchadeva Pahād. There was a threat from mosquitoes in that cow barn. Srī Guru ordered that drinking water should not be given to him.

That person had a dream in which ghosts tried to kill him by strangling his throat. In another dream, a big boulder was placed on his chest. A burly wrestler sat on the rock. With these two dreams, the result of his karma got neutralized and he became healthy. Srīpāda redeemed the karma of the tuberculosis patient by making him mentally experience the agony in the dream, which otherwise would have to be experienced physically for many years.

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 51

Protection from Drowning and Other Perils

The efficacy of a devoted reading of this book

It was the twelfth day of the second half of the month Aswayuja[1]. It was the day of Hasta star[2]. After taking a bath in the Krishna River, Srīpāda Srīvallabha went into meditation for some time. That day, the fire in the stove was not burning, however hard I tried. The fire died down. Srīpāda asked me to bathe once again and come to Him. Then he began to declare, "My dear Shankar Bhatt, the time has come for Me to hide this gross body. I will disappear in the Krishna River. I will be moving in disguise in this Kurungadda. After that, I will come again with the name of Narasimha Saraswati to restore the order of asceticism. *This great sacred book named Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam, which you are writing, will become a kalpataruvu*[3] *to devotees. It will be a book where every letter of it will be true. In the sky, only sound will be present. I will have the directions as My robe. Therefore, I am called Digambara*[4].

"The reading of this book will greatly help in correcting one's mental world. One who does a pious reading of this book will be benefitted in this world and in the other worlds also. Know that each letter in this book equals to that of the Vedic sayings. The Sanskrit copy of the book that you are writing will be preserved in the form of sound many fathoms deep beneath the audumbara tree in My Maha Samsthan. The heavenly sounds emanating from there cannot be heard by the physical ears. Those who receive My call in their heart will surely come for My dārshan. I am always alert in the protection of My devotees. A Telugu translation for

1 September-October; Aswayuja Krishna Dwadāsi: the 12th day of the descending moon phases
2 Nakshatra-constellation in the month of Libra
3 A celestial tree which fulfils all wishes
4 Wearing no clothes

your Sanskrit work will also come. It will come into light in the thirty-third generation of Srī Bāpanārya. It will be translated into many languages. The divine experiences and the protection will be the same regardless of the language it is read.

Srīpāda's assurance to Shankar Bhatt

"You have served Me very much. You are like a child who is attached to his father. I am presenting you My wooden pādukas[1]. Do not grieve thinking that I am not here. You stay here for three more years. During these three years, I will give you dārshan in the effulgent form. I will be informing you about many yogic secrets.

Disappearance of Srīpāda

After three years, on the twelfth day of the second half of the month Aswayuja, read the Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam written by you in the presence of My pādukas. Those who come for My dārshan on that day are all fortunate ones. My auspicious blessings will always be with you all."

Srīpāda Srīvallabha, the supreme Lord, after affirming so, got down into the Krishna River and disappeared.

I hugged the wooden sandals to my heart and sobbed like a small child who lost its mother. Then I fainted. After I woke up, I took a bath in the Krishna River and went into meditation. Srīpāda Srīvallabha gave dārshan in His effulgent form to my mental eyes.

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

1 Sandals worshipped as holy

Chapter 52

Yogic Experiences of Shankar Bhatt

The divine dārshan of Srīpāda

I had the dārshan of the divine effulgent form of Srīpāda Srīvallabha every day at midnight for three years. I wrote a separate book about my yogic experiences. A yogi from the Himalayas took that book. This happened in accordance with the command of Srīpāda Srīvallabha.

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Chapter 53

The Way the Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam Reaches Pīthikapuram

Special details of the Srīpāda Charitāmrutam

The Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam, which I authored, will be with the family of His maternal uncles for some time. Afterwards, it will be translated into Telugu. After the completion of the Telugu translation, the Sanskrit copy, which I have written, will vanish. The Gandharvas[1] will carry it to the birthplace of Srīpāda and will keep it at some fathoms deep. There, it will be read by siddha yogis.

I read the Charitāmrutam written by me before the divine pādukas of Srīpāda. Five people came there. They were immensely happy.

I am not a scholar. Therefore, I cannot say which chapter gives which result after reading it. The Telugu copy of this book will come into light during the thirty-third generation of Srī Bāpanārya.

Prior to bringing the Telugu copy into light, the person appointed by Srīpāda for that purpose must immerse it in the Krishna River in the sacred place of Vijayawatika[2].

The fortunate individual, who is to bring it to light, should perform a pārāyana[3] of the Telugu copy of the Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam in the holy place where His Maha Samsthan was established at His birthplace and dedicate it to His auspicious feet. During the middle of the pārāyana, that fortunate person will receive prasād[4] unsolicitedly from Gangapur[5]. This will indicate that he is the person belonging to the thirty-third generation of the family of Srī Bāpanārya.

1 Heavenly musicians
2 Today: Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh
3 Devoted reading of a book
4 Food given as an offering
5 Ganagapura; village in the Kalaburagi district of Karnataka, where Srī Narasimha Saraswati lived the last twenty years of His life

This is the divine saying of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, when He gave dārshan in His effulgent form.

Victory unto Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha!

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Appendix I

How the Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam Came to Light

The information available in the Srī Guru Charitra about Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha is very little. The very first Datta incarnation in Kali Yuga is Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha. The details of His life known to the outside world are very meagre.

In 1320 A.D., Srīpāda Srīvallabha was born as the third child to Brahmasri Ghandikota Appalaraju Sarma garu and Akhanda Lakshmi Sowbhagyavati Sumatī Maharani. The Ghandikota family belongs to the lineage of Sage Bharadwaja. They are of the Āpasthamba sūtra tradition. After Srī Srīpāda, three sisters named Srī Vidyadhari, Radha and Surekha also were born.

The maternal grandfather of Srī Srīpāda was Brahmasri Malladi Bāpannavadhani garu. His dharma patni[1] was Akhanda Lakshmi Sowbhagyavati Rajamamba.

A Brahmin by the name of Shankar Bhatt wrote the divine biography of Srī Srīpāda in Sanskrit. Its Telugu[2] translation is with me, who belongs to the thirty-third generation of Srī Bāpannavadhani. In the Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam[3], it was stated that it would come into light in the thirty-third generation of Srī Bāpannavadhani, but it was not explained at what time and in which way it would take place.

I was having a doubt whether this Charitāmrutam could be made known or not to the outside world. One day when I was in the area of Bhimavaram[4], Māvullamma[5] temple, an old beggar asked me for money for meals. I gave him eleven rupees. Within two or three days, a prasād from the ashram of Srī Narasimha Saraswati Gangapur[6] came through post. A receipt was also enclosed showing the day of the receipt, which tallied with the day on which I gave eleven rupees to the old beggar. In reality, I did not send any money at all to Gangapur. I realized that Srīpāda, who was in the

1 Righteous wife
2 South Indian language
3 Story of the divine nectar of Srīpāda Srīvallabha
4 City in the West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh
5 Form of the Divine Mother
6 Ganagapura; village in the Kalaburagi district of Karnataka, where Srī Narasimha Saraswati lived the last twenty years of His life

form of Srī Narasimha Saraswati, wished that the time to reveal the Charitāmrutam to the world had arrived. Having realized it, I carefully copied the old book, which was brittle and would be torn by the mere touch. As mentioned in the Charitāmrutam, I went to Vijayawada and immersed the old copy in the Krishna River. The new book, which I copied, was handed over after performing the pārāyana[1] to the Srīpāda Srīvallabha Maha Samsthan as directed in the Charitāmrutam.

This year, from Vijaya Dasimi (year 2001) to Aswayuja Bahula Ekadasi[2], the pārāyana was done for the first time in the presence of Srīpāda in the Srī Srīpāda Samsthan and the book was handed to the Samsthanam.

We have affectionate devotion in Srī Srīpāda. Ours is a delicate nature and we are pained if anyone speaks jeeringly about this most sacred book. Our family is one that never craves for name and fame or money.

However, we deemed it our duty to hand over this divine biography, which is very precious to the Datta devotees. So, this was brought to light.

This book is one where every letter in it is true. Every letter written in this book is powerful and true. In this book, there are no hyperboles or meaningless descriptions. This was written by Shankar Bhatt, who did not have much of an erudite experience. He was a Kannadiga. Srī Srīpāda granted him grace because he was worthy.

This book should be made into a book of daily pārāyana[3]. When faced with any sort of troubles and losses, or difficult situations, if a devoted reading of this book is made and sufficient money for the donation of food for eleven people is utilized, the result will definitely be obtained at once. This kind of assurance was received actually from Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha and the book was written during His life time. Therefore, let Datta devotees make a devoted reading of this book and derive experience in their lives. You will understand through experience that this book is an Akshara Satya Grandha.

In Service of Datta
Malladi Govinda Deekshitulu
Bhimavaram
12 November 2001

1 Devoted reading of a book
2 Hindu festivals beginning/mid of October
3 Devoted reading of a book

Appendix II

The Importance of Datta Worship and of the Charitāmrutam

In this world many troubles and losses will be experienced by a human being through sorrow and infatuation. Who is the protector against them? Who will rescue him from worries and miseries? Paramātma is the only saviour. Only by the grace of God, all sorrows are destroyed, and happiness and peace will be obtained. For that, a person should practice stotra, prayer, japa, meditation, etc., of God as well as devotional reading of sacred books explaining their significance to gain the grace of Paramātma[1]. Paramātma is in the form of the Trinity Brahma, Vishnu and Parameswara[2]. The Trinity protects, punishes, or teaches all the creatures of the universe. All things happen on account of Them. In Krita Yuga[3], the Trinity, who were elated with the devotion of Atri and Anasuya, incarnated in their house as Srī Dattatreya Swamī — an embodiment of the Trinity. His incarnation is that of a guru. The aim of this incarnation is to remove ignorance and grant liberation through the attainment of wisdom (jnāna). The path of avadhūtas is founded only by Him. Devotion of such Dattatreya is going on from Krita Yuga from Sethu[4] in the South to the Himalayas in the North. Countless devotees from that day till today worshipped Dattatreya and were successful in gaining their wishes. When Datta is worshipped, an equivalent result is achieved as worshipping Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara at the same time. Datta is Smarthrugāmi. It means that when remembered with devotion, He will be satisfied and supports and protects devotees in all ways. He grants sustenance and salvation.

In 1320 A.D, in Srī Kshetra Pīthikapuram in East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh, Srī Dattatreya Swamī was born as the first Datta incarnation under the divine name of Srīpāda Srīvallabha to the couple Appalaraju Sarma and Sumatī. They were Datta devotees and belonged to the Āpasthamba sect. Afterwards, He incarnated as the second incarnation in Ka-

1 Super-self / super soul
2 The highest God
3 The first of the four ages, the Golden Age
4 Rama Setu; 50 km long bridge of sandbanks, riffs and islands between India and Sri Lanka

ranjapura in Maharashtra with the name Srī Narasimha Saraswati. In the Guru Charitra, the importance of such Srīpāda Srīvallabha was explained merely in five chapters, but in this Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam, all fifty-three chapters vividly describe about Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha. This great book is really a divine elixir. In this book, all about Srīpāda's life, His līlas (sportive plays), His greatness, His highly elevated preachings and His incredible miracles are abundantly presented. This book makes the reader forget this world and brings about a feeling of being in the very presence of Srī Srīpāda. The sportive pastimes of Srīpāda are like the childhood sportive diversions of Srī Krishna. These līlas give indescribable joy. With this joy, transcendent corporeality is attained. Srī Srīpāda made this biography to be written in His own lifetime by Srī Shankar Bhatt, a resident of Karnataka province who was His dear disciple and a great devotee.

When all people read and recollect this sacred biography, they will get rid of all worries of worldly existence and be rewarded with the grace of Srī Srīpāda Srīvallabha. As a consequence of that, they will get happiness, peace and equanimity. Let them encourage all their relatives, kith and kin and friends to read and earn the compassion of Srīpāda Srīvallabha and be gratified.

Sripada Srivallabha Mahasamasthanam, Pithapuram
Jaya Jaya Raghuvira Samartha Sadguru
Sri Sajjanagada Ramaswamy[1]
Srī Gurudeva Datta

1 (1925 - 2018) Disciple of Srīdharaswamy; developed the Samsthan at the birthplace of Srīpāda as announced by Srīpāda

Appendix III

The Seven Days Pārāyana[1] of Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam

In the book, Srīpāda states[2]: "Don't think that the Srī Charitāmrutam book is a mere book. It is a live stream of a glorious consciousness. When you make a devoted reading, the strength of those letters flows into My mental consciousness. As you have a connection with Me without being aware of it, all your rightful desires will be fulfilled by My mercy. Even when this great book is preserved in your room of worship, it causes auspicious vibrations. Forces of misfortune and spirits of darkness are driven away." And further[3]: "Reading of this book greatly helps in correcting the mental world. One who does a pious reading of this book will be benefitted of this world and other worlds also. Know that each letter in this equals to the Vedic sayings."

There is a spiritual practice of reading the book in a certain number of days with devotion and diligence called pārāyana. For the seven days, pārāyana it is proposed to read it in the following manner:

First day	Chapter 01 to 06
Second day	Chapter 07 to 12
Third day	Chapter 13 to 18
Fourth day	Chapter 19 to 22
Fifth day	Chapter 23 to 34
Sixth day	Chapter 35 to 42
Seventh day	Chapter 43 to 53

After a devoted reading of the book, food should be offered to at least eleven good people, or an amount sufficient for such food donation should be given to a place of Dattatreya worship or other such places.

1 Literally: Totally devoted to the essence; devoted reading; reading a scripture in a certain rhythm (for example a week) to gain spiritual progress or to get worldly problems solved

2 Chap. 31

3 Chap. 51

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Appendix IV

Pithapuram and Kuruvapuram

Pithapuram, in the East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh, India, is the place where Srīpāda Srīvallabha passed the first sixteen years of His life. In olden times, it was called Pīthikapuram. Later, until His disappearance in 1350, Srīpāda mainly stayed in Kuruvapuram, also called Kurungadda in the book. Today it is called Kurugaddi, Kuravapur or Kurupuram. It is located on an island in the Krishna River in the Raichur district, at the border between the Indian states of Telangana and Karnataka. Both places can be easily found via online map services.

As announced by Srīpāda, a Samsthan (temple and place of worship) got established at His birthplace in Pithapuram. It was slowly developed through the relentless activity of late Srī Sajjanagada Ramaswamy since 1966. In its centre stand worship and service activities like publishing of books, conducting Pūjas and festivals, feeding of the poor, cow worship and accommodating the pilgrims. For this, several houses have been constructed. The activities are conducted in a spirit of selfless service. Donations made to the Sripada Srivallabha Seva Sangh are exempted from the Indian Income Tax under Rule 80G. Those who want to contribute financially to the development or worship activities can pay donations directly in the office of the Samsthan. They can also remit them through Andhra Bank, Pithapuram (Instant Fund Transfer) S.B. A/c No. 8761 (Branch Code No. 0432) or Indian Overseas Bank, Pithapuram, A/c No. 2620 or State Bank of India, Pithapuram, S.B. A/c No. 01100005138 under intimation to the Samsthan; international money transfers with passport copy:

SRI SRIPADA SRIVALLABHA MAHA SAMSTHANAM
Venu Gopala Swamī Temple Street, Pithapuram - 533 450
East Godavari Dist. (A. P.). Phone +91 (08869) 250300
http://www.sripadasrivallabhamahasamsthanam.com

In Kuruvapur and Panchadev Pahad, on the opposite site of the Krishna River, there are some small temples. It is a spiritually very profound place without much outer structures.

https://sripada-srivallabha.org/en/web/places/pithapuram_and_kuruvapuram

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

Appendix V

Register of Persons[1]

Srīpāda

(Srīpāda Srīvallabha, Srī Charana, Srī Gurucharan, 1302–1350) The first incarnation of > Dattatreya in Kali Yuga, born 1320 in Pīthikapuram as the third child of > Raja Sarma and his wife > Akhanda Lakshmi Sowbhagyavati Sumatī Maharani; disappeared 1350 in Kuruvapuram; reincarnated as > Narasimha Saraswati and > Swamī Samartha as well as in several partial manifestations; is also a number of other divine manifestations like Venkateswara and Kalki

Abdul Baba and Bade Baba

Two Muslims presenting themselves as Brahmins; tried to rape > Susīlā; were sent away by Srīpāda; will be born as Abdul Baba and Bade Baba and will bring > Sai Baba to Shirdi (chap. 17, 18)

Agastya

Rishi; great sage; married with > Lopa Mudra; still lives in South India in the form of a Siddha (chap. 3, 10, 25, 31)

Akhanda Lakshmi Sowbhagyavati Rajamamba

> Rajamamba

Akhanda Lakshmi Sowbhagyavati Sumatī Maharani

> Sumatī

Akshya Kumar

Follower of the Jain religion residing in Tripura province; will bring the horoscope of Srīpāda Srīvallabha to Pithapuram in a few centuries, after the Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam will have come to light (chap. 5, 6)

Amsa Avatars

Srīpāda promised that His partial manifestations would come 12 times; His last manifestation would be > Ramlal Maha Prabhu (chap. 8)

1 The register comprises persons referred to in the book, either in physical incarnation around the time of the life of Srīpāda or in direct relation to it. Some persons have been added which are only hinted to in the text but are known today. The register only contains few references to deities. There are chapter indications with persons mentioned only in a few chapters.

Ananda Sarma

Brahmin; visited by > Dattatreya in his childhood; Srīpāda blessed him that he would have his last incarnation as Avadhūta > Venkayya (chap. 13)

Anasuya

Mother of > Dattatreya; married with > Atri

Appala Lakshmi Narasimha Raja Sarma

> Raja Sarma

Appalaraja Sarma

> Raja Sarma

Āsutosh

Vedic scholar from Bengal with Nādi books; explains that the horoscope of Srīpāda will come to Pīthikapuram a long time after the end of His incarnation; in Srīpāda's next incarnation he would be one of His main disciples (chap. 6)

Atri

Father of > Dattatreya; married with > Anasuya

Babaji

(Mahāvatar Babaji) > Dattatreya taught kriya yoga in the form of Babaji, in a 25 years old young form (chap. 8)

Bangaramma

30 years old woman from the cobbler caste; married with > Bangarayya; after his death she lives together with > Vedanta Sarma, who is now called Bangarayya; Srīpāda explains that in the next life they would be priests in Kuruvapuram (chap. 36)

Bangārappa

Goldsmith; wanted to kill > Bāpanārya and Srīpāda with black magical means which fell back on him; is hanging topsy-turvy in a well; is released by quenching the thirst of > Shankar Bhatt by drinking water himself (chap. 15)

Bangarayya

A man from the cobbler caste; married with > Bangaramma; they wanted to make leather sandals for Srīpāda from a cow which died in the house of > Vedanta Sarma; dies in the presence of Srīpāda and the council of Brahmins; partial incarnation of Vedanta Sarma (chap. 36)

Bāpanāryulu

(Bapannāvadhanulu, Brahmasri Malladi Bāpannavadhani, Satya Rishīswara)

Great scholar from the line of the sage Haritasa; maternal grandfather of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, married with > Rajamamba; brother-in-law of > Srīdharāvadhanulu; lived in earlier births as > Bhaskarācharya, as Lābhāda Maharshi and as Nanda, the stepfather of Krishna

Bapannāvadhanulu

> Bāpanāryulu

Bharadwaja

Great sage, conducted in Treta Yuga a great sacrifice in Pithapuram; many great persons were born in his lineage

Bhaskara Sastry

Priest of the temple in Tripurantakam; devotee of Shodasi Raja Rajeswari; gives teachings to > Shankar Bhatt; explains under which circumstances Srīpāda left Pīthikapuram in his sixteenth year and events after His disappearance; receives the copper sandals of Srīpāda for worship; they would transform into golden sandals and come to His Samsthan in Pīthikapuram to be installed subterraneously (chap. 40 - 46)

Bhaskarācharya

Spiritual guru of the Ārya Vaishya community in the Brihat Sila Kingdom at the time of the incarnation of > Vasavī; reincarnated as > Bāpanāryulu

Bhīma

Hunchback; Srīpāda made him win against the wrestler > Kula Sekhara and corrects his hunchback (chap. 12)

Brahmasri Malladi Bāpannavadhani

> Bāpanāryulu

Chatrapati Shivaji

> Shivaji

Dattadas

Pariah beggar; is blessed by Srīpāda who gives twelve assurances (chap. 14)

Dattānanda Swamī

> Srī Swamī

Dattatreya

(Lord Datta) Son of > Atri and > Anasuya; incarnated as Srīpāda Srīvallabha, > Narasimha Saraswati, > Swamī Samartha; revealed himself in sixteen forms in ancient times

Dhana Gupta

Vaishya; Srīpāda asks him to give his daughter in marriage to the son of > Dharma Gupta (chap. 46)

Dhananjaya

Merchant; found a Shiva linga consecrated by Indra and informed the ruler > Kula Sekhara Pāndya; was reborn as > Kusuma Shresti (chap. 2)

Dhandiswāmi

Arrogant swāmi who challenged Srīpāda and His family; Srīpāda broke his pride and sent him to the Himalayas (chap. 21)

Dharma Gupta

Vaishya and Shiva devotee; related with > Sresthi; goes to Kurungadda; gives teachings to > Shankar Bhatt and travels with him (chap. 22 - 46)

Dhruva

A great devotee of Vishnu; became the Polar Star because of the intensity of his spiritual aspiration (chap. 4)

Gadadhar

(Gadadhar Chattopadhyay, 1836–1886) Birth name of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa; would refuse to incarnate again (chap. 4)

Gajanana

(Gajanan Maharaj, - 1910); Srīpāda prophesied that with the power of His Ganesha incarnation, Gajanana would be born after some centuries (chap. 7)

Gopalarao

> Venkusa

Gorakshanāth

(Gorakshaka; lifetime unknown; 7th or 11th-12th century) Mahayogi; incarnation of the > Nava Nādha Hari; disciple of Matschyendranath; learnt kriya yoga from > Dattatreya; is worshipped esp. in the north of India; the city of Gorakhpur, north of Varanasi, is named after him (chap. 3, 8, 32)

Guru Sārvabhūma

Title for Srīpāda and for > Raghavendra Swami (chap. 21)

Gurucharan

Worshipped > Dattatreya in his childhood; fell into poverty and was saved by > Dattatreya; was in an earlier birth a son of > Vissavadhāni (chap. 20, 21)

Gurudatta Bhatt

Astrologer; saved by Srīpāda in Pīthikapuram of becoming a living corpse; comes later to Kurungadda (chap. 22)

Hanuman

Meditates since aeons on the seed sound Ram; received initiation into kriya yoga by > Shyama Charan; Srīpāda visits him in Nepal and asks him to incarnate as Sai Nādha (> Sai Baba) and to worship Him under the name of Allah; Srīpāda would incarnate in him, > Varish Alisha and > Gopalarao would be his teachers (chap. 1, 9, 19, 45)

Jesus

Born through > Maria even when she was a virgin; > Vasavī gave Her power to the soul of Maria; all the consciousness reflecting in the universe is the consciousness of Jesus Christ (chap. 4, 19)

Jnaneswar

Also called Dnyandeo or Dnyaneshwar (1275-1296); great yogi living in Maharashtra; conscious Samadhi (chap. 3)

John

White man from Germany who meets Srīpāda in Kuruvapuram; Srīpāda assures him that in the coming centuries the Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam will appear also in German (chap. 4)

Jyoti Ramalingaswami

>Ramalingaswami

Kalki

> Srīpāda

Kanyaka Parameswari

> Vasavī

Krishna Das

A Haridās (minstrel singing the glory of god) who gives > Gurucharan an audumbara plant which is an offspring of the audumbara tree in the house of the maternal grandfather of Srīpāda (chap. 20)

Krishna Das

Paria beggar; worshipper of Vishnu; gives teachings to > Shankar Bhatt and Gurucharan on their walk to Kurungadda (chap. 21)

Krishna Saraswati

Reincarnation of > Mādhavācharya; guru of > Narasimha Saraswati (chap. 8, 11, 13)

Kula Sekhara
: Wrestler; expert in the secret science marmakala; Srīpāda breaks his arrogance by letting the hunchback > Bhīma win against him (chap. 12)

Kula Sekhara Pāndya
: Ruler of the Pāndya-Dynasty; built the city of Madhura and developed the sanctuary of the Shiva lingam there; his son is > Malaya Dhwaja Pāndya (chap. 2)

Kusuma Shresti
: Incarnation of a holy person called Samadhi and of the merchant > Dhananjaya; ruled over the area of Brihat Sila Nagaram (Penugonda, AP); married with Kūsumbi; father of > Vasavī Kanyaka Parameswari

Lābhāda
: (Lābhāda Maharshi) A muni (monk) from the Vaishya community of an earlier Yuga, reborn as stepfather of Krishna and as > Bāpanāryulu

Lakshmi
: Shepherdess in Pīthikapuram; brought milk and cream to the family of Srīpāda; her husband died but could not leave the body; was the female form of > Purana pandit (chap. 38)

Linganna Sastry
: Great Vedic scholar; visited Srīpāda in Kuruvapuram (chap. 19)

Lopa Mudra
: Wife of > Agastya, born to the king of Vidarbha through the power of penance of > Agastya (chap. 31)

Lord Datta
: > Dattatreya

Mādhavā Nambūdri
: Travel companion of > Shankar Bhatt; is bitten by snakes and dies; is brought back to life by Palaniswami (chap. 3, 4)

Mādhavācharya
: (Vidyāranya) Siddha; scholar of a high degree, brother of > Sāyanāchārya; will become the sage Vidyāranya; will be reborn as the ascetic > Krishna Saraswati; will be the guru of > Narasimha Saraswati; in a later incarnation Govinda Dikshitulu, prime minister of the rulers of Tanjore (chap. 8, 11)

Maha Mathi
: (Muhammad, 570–632) Devotee of the formless Makkeshwar (Lord of Mecca); called God as Allah (chap. 4)

Maharshi Bharadwaja
> Bharadwaja

Mahāvatar Babaji
> Babaji

Malaya Dhwaja Pāndya
Son of > Kula Sekhara Pāndya; conducted a sacrifice for obtaining progeny; from the sacrifice, the goddess Mīnakshiwas born as a three-year-old baby girl not born out of womb (chap.2)

Malladi Govinda Deekshitulu
Descendent of > Bāpanāryulu in the thirty-third generation; brought the Charitāmrutam to light in 2001

Mānikya
(Manik Prabhu, 1817–1865) Created by Srīpāda out of a necklace (Mānikya Hāra) of Sīta and assigned to be a guru (chap. 45)

Maria
Gave birth to > Jesus, even when she was a virgin (chap. 4)

Nagendra Sastry
Brahmin; serpent worshipper; saw in Pīthikapuram a holy serpent with a gem on its hood and wanted to have such a serpent; received copper sandals from Srīpāda for worship and for healing diseases; made the soul of his deceased wife enter into the body of another deceased woman and caused many problems, which Srīpāda solved; receives from > Shankar Bhatt the pearl of a black cobra and gives him the copper sandals (chap. 39)

Nāmānanda
(Sāyanāchāryulu) Ascet to whom Srīpāda appeared as a Pariah, transformed into Dattatreya and gave him the name Nāmānanda (chap. 17)

Nanda
Stepfather of Krishna, reborn as > Bāpanāryulu

Narasāvadhāni
Dogmatic Vedic scholar who did not believe in Srīpāda and tried to insult His family; his good karma left him; he died and was brought back to life by Srīpāda; in His next incarnation He would visit his house (chap. 6, 7)

Narasimha Khan
Old Brahmin from Maharashtra, of the line of Kāsyapa; comes to the Kukkuteswara temple to receive Datta Dīksha from the fraudulent

>sanyasi; he disappears, and the money given by him transforms into charcoal. (chap. 42)

Narasimha Rayudu

Farmer, lost his parents in childhood; harassed by his aunt and his girlfriend Ramani; mistreated by a magician-sanyasi; Srīpāda transforms the situation and marries Narasimha with Ramani (chap. 33)

Narasimha Saraswati

(1378–1459) Second incarnation of > Dattatreya in Kali Yuga for 80 years; displayed many miracles in Gandharvanagar (Ganagapura); appeared after 300 years of penance in Kadali Vana in Prajnapura as > Swamī Samartha

Narasimha Varma

> Varma

Nava Nādhas

Nine great Siddha Yogis, partial manifestations of > Dattatreya (chap. 32)

Palanī

> Palaniswami

Palaniswami

(Palanī) A 300 years old hermit living in the hills of Chidambaram; continues his life by entering into the corpse of a youth who died (chap. 3, 4)

Parameswara

Highest male aspect of the Divine; a name of Shiva; manifested as Sundareswar

Parameswari

Highest female aspect of the Divine; manifested herself as the daughter of Pāndya Bhūpala with the name Minakshi; manifested herself as > Vasavī

Prahlāda

Great devotee of Vishnu in ancient times; incarnated as > Raghavendra Swami (chap. 21, 29)

Purana Pandit

Great yogi; searched with yogic powers the other forms assumed by his soul and attracted their consciousness into himself to finish his karma and to merge with God; saw that his feminine forms had merged with > Lakshmi and his soul was also in an infant who was intended to be the husband of Lakshmi's next birth; the withdrawal of

the soul would have caused the death of the infant; Srīpāda ordered him not to do so and to live in the next incarnation with Lakshmi as a happy couple and be His devotees (chap. 38)

Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti

> Sreshti

Radha

Second sister of Srīpāda; married with Viswanadha Muralikrishna Avadhani of Vijayawada (chap. 11)

Raghavendra Swami

(1595-1671) Incarnation of > Prahlāda; also called by the title Guru Sārvabhūma; announcement of his incarnation by Srīpāda; declared in 1671 before attaining samādhi that he will be with his disciples for 700 years (chap. 20, 21)

Raja Sarma

(Appalaraja Sarma, Appala Lakshmi Narasimha Raja Sarma) Reincarnation of Vishnu Datta; married with > Sumatī; father of Srīpāda as third child; first child > Srīdhararaja Sarma, boy, born blind; second child > Ramaraja Sarma, boy, born lame; fourth child > Vidyadhari, girl; fifth child > Radha, girl; sixth child > Surekha, girl

Rajamamba

(Akhanda Lakshmi Sowbhagyavati Rajamamba) Maternal grandmother of Srīpāda Srīvallabha, married with > Bāpanāryulu

Ramalingaswami

(Jyoti Ramalingaswami; Vallalar; Arutprakasa Vallalar Chidambaram Ramalingam; 5 October 1823 – disappeared on 30 January 1874) Incarnation of a kāla nāga serpent; one of the most famous Tamil saints and also one of the greatest Tamil poets of the 19th century (chap. 3)

Ramaraja Sarma

Second eldest brother of Srīpāda; born lame, healed by Srīpāda; became famous in his next incarnation as Avadhūta Srīdhara, as a partial manifestation of > Dattatreya (chap. 9, 11, 41)

Ramlal Maha Prabhu

> Amsa Avatar of Srīpāda; born 1888 in Amritsar, Punjab; existed fifty-one years in his first body form (-1939?) and continues to exist in his second body form in the Himalaya; venerated as a siddha yogi (chap. 8)

Ravana

Demon king (Rakshasa), lived on the island of Lanka; incarnated after his death in a partial aspect as > Vishnu Vardhana

Ravi Das

(Ravi Dasu) Washerman who served Srīpāda in Kuruvapuram and died; reincarnated in the family of a Muslim ruler and got the dārshan of Narasimha Saraswati (17, 18, 48)

Sada Siva Brahmendra

Incarnation of a kāla nāga serpent; great saint, composer of Carnatic music and Advaita philosopher who lived near Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu in the 17th to 18th century (chap. 3)

Sai Baba

(Shirdi Sai Baba, Samartha Sadguru,Sarva Samartha SadguruSainādh, Yavana Fakir; – 1918) Brahmin of the line of Bharadwaja; lost his parents in childhood; was brought up by a Muslim fakir; learnt with a Hindu mahatma and kriya yoga from > Shyama Charan; in later years, Srīpāda conferred his power on him; is not different from Srīpāda's nature (chap. 4, 18, 32)

Sajjanagada Ramaswamy Varu

(1925-2018) Disciple of Srīdharaswamy; developed the Samsthan at the birthplace of Srīpāda as announced by Srīpāda (chap. 41)

Samardha Ramadas

Reincarnation of > Srīdhararaja Sarma, eldest brother of Srīpāda; preceptor of > Shivaji (chap. 9, 41)

Sanyasi

Devotee of Bagalāmukhi from Bengal; gives > Shankar Bhatt the pearl of a black cobra in exchange for the leather sandals of Srīpāda; was in deep samadhi in Pīthikapuram for eight days until Srīpāda awakens him; tells the story of the peasant woman > Lakshmi (chap. 38)

Sanyasi

Old ascetic; has the desire to visit Srīpāda and joins > Shankar Bhatt; Srīpāda tells him he should go to Kashi, live there and leave his body there (chap. 46, 47, 48)

Sanyasi

Fraudulent ascetic who gives Datta dīkshas (initiations) for money in the Kukkuteswara temple; gets entangled in problems when > Narasimha Khan appears and is driven out of Pīthikapuram (chap 41, 42)

Sarabheswara Sastry
: Scholar; expert in the science of mantras; makes prediction with the help of spirits; loses through the influence of Srīpāda (chap. 24)

Sarma
: (Sundara Rama Sarma) priest of the Maharaja of Pīthikapuram; the Maharaja and Sarma suffer attacks from ghosts after the refusal of Srīpāda to follow an order of the Maharaja; both finally seek His refuge (chap. 15)

Satchitananda
: Several centuries old avadhūta, whom his teacher Srī Visweswara Prabhu sends to Srīpāda in Pīthikapuram; he shows with a ritual that Srīpāda is truly > Dattatreya (chap. 9)

Satya Rishīswara
: > Bāpanāryulu

Sāyanāchārya
: Scholar of a high degree, brother of > Mādhavācharya; wrote commentaries on the Vedas (chap. 11)

Sāyanāchāryulu
: > Nāmānanda

Shankar Bhatt
: (Shankarā) A Brahmin from Karnataka, writes the biography of Srīpāda in Sanskrit during Srīpāda's lifetime

Shankarā
: > Shankar Bhatt

Shilada
: A sage in ancient times who lived by eating stones; incarnated as Nandīswara; was born as twin brother of Kanyaka Parameswari (chap. 24, 26)

Shiva Sarma
: Vedic scholar and pious Brahmin in Kuruvapuram; sacrifices his life, so that his son is transformed by Srīpāda to a great scholar; Srīpāda promises to incarnate in his next life as Narasimha Saraswati with him and his wife (chap. 4)

Shiva Yogi
: Avadhūta to whom Srīpāda givesdārshan in Shiva-Shakti form; explains many secrets to > Shankar Bhatt (chap. 23)

Shivaji

(Chatrapati Shivaji, Shivaji Maharaja, 1627/30–1680) Great Indian warrior king; rebirth of > Narasimha Varma; > Samardha Ramadas was his teacher (chap. 9, 41, 47)

Shyama Charan

Lahiri Mahasaya (Shyama Charan Lahiri, 1828-1895); great yogi in Varanasi; disciple of Mahāvatar > Babaji; Srīpāda orders him to be born to teach kriya yoga to the householders; taught kriya yoga to > Shirdi Sai Baba (chap. 4, 45)

Siddha

A sage, worshipper of Tāradevi; encountered the goddess as a charming girl with foot anklets; she transformed into a boy who gave Siddha the foot anklets and disappeared; experienced the same in Pithapuram in a mysterious encounter with Srīpāda; gives the foot anklets to > Shankar Bhatt (chap. 35)

Siddhendra Yogi

Great yogi in the Kadamba forest near Marutva Malai (chap.2)

Somidevamma

Mentioned in the Datta Purāna scripture; reincarnated as > Sumatī (chap. 6, 9)

Sowbhagyavatī

> Sumatī

Sreshti

(Pynda Venkatappayya Sreshti, Venkatappayya Sreshti); rich Vaishya in Pīthikapuram; friend of the family of Srīpāda

Srī Charana

> Srīpāda

Srī Gurucharan

> Srīpāda

Srī Swamī

(Dattānanda Swamī) stammered and quickly aged in his childhood; was healed by Srīpāda; tells> Shankar Bhatt childhood stories of Srīpāda (chap. 14)

Srīdhararaja Sarma

Eldest brother of Srīpāda; born blind, healed by Srīpāda; became a great scholar; in the next incarnation as Samardha Ramadas he was

the preceptor of > Shivaji; partial manifestation of > Dattatreya (chap. 6, 9, 11, 41)

Srīdharāvadhanulu

(Malladi Srīdharāvadhanulu, Srīdhara; not to be confounded with > Srīdhara, the future incarnation of > Ramaraja) Great scholar; brother-in-law of > Bāpanāryulu; from the Kaushika line; Ganapati changed his name from Srīdharāvadhanulu to Srīpāda, this becoming the family name of his descendants (not to be confounded with > Srīpāda Srīvallabha) (chap. 5)

Srīmannarayana

Poverty-stricken farmer whom Srīpāda leads to an old couple who makes him their heir (chap. 16)

Subbanna Sastry

Brahmin; visits Srīpāda in Kuruvapuram; acts as a priest at the marriage of > Vallabhesa (chap. 18 - 19)

Subbayya

Barber; ran away from home twenty years earlier; gambled with > Shankar Bhatt in a previous life betting Subbayya's wife; Shankar Bhatt is therefore taken for him and tortured for several days (chap. 5)

Subbayya Sreshti

Vaishya; lost his parents in childhood; wastes his money with a prostitute; puts > Raja Sarma deceitfully into debt; Srīpāda dissolves merits of his previous lives and orders him to sell eatables; in a copper vessel there is always enough food for himself and others (chap. 10, 11, 12)

Sumatī

(Sumatī Maharani, Sowbhagyavatī; Akhanda Lakshmi Sowbhagyavati Sumatī Maharani) Reincarnation of Somidevamma, also called Susīla; married with > Raja Sarma; mother of Srīpāda and five other children, see > Raja Sarma

Sumatī Maharani

> Sumatī

Sundara Rama Sarma

> Sarma

Surekha

Third sister of Srīpāda; married with Tadepalli Dattatreya Avadhani of Mangalagiri (chap. 11)

Surya Chandra Sastry
Scholar; priest in Pīthikapuram, devotee of Srīpāda (chap. 23)

Susīla
Mentioned in the Datta Purāna scripture; reincarnated as > Sumatī (chap. 6, 9)

Susīlā
Brahmin lady; chased by pseudo Brahmins; Srīpāda appears to her as a charioteer and removes the impotence of her husband (chap. 17)

Swamī Samartha
(Akkalkot Swamī Maharaj, - 1878) Third incarnation of > Dattatreya in Kali Yuga

Tirumala Das
Washerman; a great scholar and a miser in his previous life; was washing clothes in the house of > Bāpanārya and > Raja Sarma; tells> Shankar Bhatt many stories about Srīpāda's childhood; will incarnate as Gadge Maharaj and will receive grace from > Narasimha Saraswati and later from Swamī Samartha (chap. 5 - 9)

Vallabha Das
(Vallābhādasu) Cobbler; heals> Shankar Bhatt and gives him teachings (chap. 2)

Vallabhesa
(Vallabheswara Sarma) Young Brahmin; Srīpāda gets him married with the daughter of a poor Brahmin, with > Subbanna Sastry as priest; will be beheaded by thieves and brought back to life by Srīpāda (chap. 18 - 19)

Varish Alisha
Waris Ali Shah (1819 - 7 April 1905) Sufi saint from Dewa, Barabanki district, Uttar Pradesh; founder of the Warsi order of Sufism; incarnation of Mahabhūb Subhani; great sage; preceptor of > Sai Baba (chap. 45)

Varma
(Vatsavāyi Narasimha Varma) Kshatriya from the line of Vasishta; closely connected with Srīpāda; regards Srīpāda as his grandson; will be reborn as > Shivaji

Vasavī
(Vasavī Kanyaka Parameswari, Kanyaka Parameswari, Ambika) Incarnation of the World Mother; sister of Srīpāda; > Parameswari

Vasudevananda Saraswati
: (Tembe Swami, 1854–1914) Srīpāda announced that he would later identify the house of Srī Bapanarya in Pīthikapuram, where Srīpāda was born, and receive nirvikalpa samadhi from Srī Ramlal (chap. 8)

Vatsavāyi Narasimha Varma
: > Varma

Vedanta Sarma
: (called Bangarayya) Sixty-years-old Brahmin; married three times; all three women died; together with the council of Brahmins of Pithapuram, he wants to get Srīpāda and His family expelled from Pithapuram; Srīpāda explains that Vedanta Sarma has incarnated at the same time as > Bangarayya and his female form as his three wives and as > Bangaramma as well as a cow; the consciousness of the three wives already merged with > Bangaramma; Bangarayya dies in front of the council of Brahmins and his consciousness enters into Vedanta Sarma; Srīpāda orders him to live together with Bangaramma without a bodily relation and to call himself as > Bangarayya; in the next life they will be priests in Kuruvapuram (chap. 36)

Venkatappayya Sreshti
: > Sreshti

Venkateswara
: > Srīpāda

Venkavadhani
: Maternal uncle of Srīpāda (chap. 8, 45, 47)

Venkayya
: Farmer, had devotion and care towards Srīpāda; Srīpāda goes to his house for a whole day and night to give Datta Dikshas (chap. 41, 42, 47); also the name of > Ananda Sarma in his last birth as an avadhūta (chap. 13)

Venkusa
: (Gopalarao, Swamī Venkavadhūta) Born in the early 19th century in a Brahmin family in the village Selu, Maharashtra; Vishnu worshipper and devotee of > Venkateswara; preceptor of > Sai Baba (chap. 45)

Vidyadhari
: First sister of Srīpāda; married with Chandra Sekhar Avadhani (chap. 11)

Vidyāranya
> Mādhavācharya

Vimaladitya
> Vishnu Vardhana

Virupāksha
Incarnation of a partial aspect of Nandiswar, the Bull, mount of Shiva; brother of > Vasavī; appears to > Shankar Bhatt as a farmer (chap. 1, 4, 27)

Vishnu Datta
Mentioned in the Datta Purāna scripture; reincarnated as > Raja Sarma (chap. 6, 9)

Vishnu Vardhana
(Vimaladitya) a maharaja; partial incarnation of the demon king Ravana; illegitimately coveted > Vasavī (chap. 27, 28, 29, 30, 32)

Vissavadhāni
Derides Srīpāda and His family and brings about quarrels; is reborn as a thorny bush, which > Gurucharan uproots and burns on demand of Srīpāda; in an earlier birth Gurucharan was his son (chap. 21)

Visweswara Maha Prabhu
A form of Dattatreya; is seen in an old form in Kaivalya Shrunga mountains between Nepal and Bhutan (chap. 8)

Vyāghreswara Sarma
A Brahmin from Atreyapuram; gained the yogic ability to transform himself into a tiger; protects the dwelling places of sages (chap. 1)

Yogini Mother
Lives with a group of Yoginis, worshippers of Chinna Masta, in a forest; they give women‘s clothes to > Shankar Bhatt and > Dharma Gupta; the two transform into women and are beheaded in a nightly ritual; at dawn the scene dissolves and the two become again men; a traveller later explains the meaning of this yogic ritual (chap. 37)

Appendix VI

References

1. Text Sources

Sreepada Sreevallabha Charitaamrutam
(Divine Biography of Sreepada Sreevallabha - An Ecstatic Elixir)
Translated from Telugu by Srī Perepa Srirama Murthy
Published by © Sree Sreepada Sreevallabha Maha Samsthanam
Pithapuram – 533 450, East Godavari Dist., Andhra Pradesh, India
First edition (without year)

Sreepada Sreevallabha Charitaamrutam
(Divine Biography of Sreepada Sreevallabha - An Ecstatic Elixir)
Translated from Telugu by Dr. J. Satyaprasad, M.D
Published by © Sri Datta Viswaroopa Samithi, c/o Sri Maruthi Lorry Transport
Opposite Krishnadevaraya Kapu Kalyana Mandapam, - 534101, India.
First edition (without year)

Sripada Sri Vallabha Divya Charitamrutham (Sampoornamu)
Translated by Keerthi Vallabha, Hyderabad (Unpublished document)

2. Pictures

The pictures used in the book are either public domain or photos provided by friends for the publication.

3. Footnotes

The following footnotes were prepared using the sources listed hereafter; the spelling of the words does not necessarily correspond to the forms used there.

Wikipedia[1]*:*

Ādi Sesha; Adwaita; Aghori; Agrahāram; Akkalkot; Akkalkot Swami; Amaranath; Amāvāsya; Amla; Ankusa; Antarvedi; Apsara; Ardra; Arunachala; Āryavartam; Ashvini; Aswayuja; Audumbara; Avadhūta; Ayyappa Swamī; Badrinath; Bagalāmukhi; Bāla; Bhadrapada; Bhairavi; Bhavishya Purāna; Bhiksha; Bhimavaram; Bhūrja Patra; Brahma Hatya; Brahma Yoni; Brahmakamala; Brahmanas; Chaitra; Chandala; Chinna Mastha Devi; Chitra; Chitragupta; Chittoor; Damaru; Darbār; Dasa Maha Vidyas; Dasami; Dasaswamedha Ghatt; Devanagari; Dhanishta; Dharma; Dharma Sāsta; Dharma Sāstra; Dunagiri; Dronagiri; Dwadasi; Ekadasi; Ekajata; Fathom; Finger millet (Eleusine coracana); Gajanan Maharaj; Ganagapur; Gandharvanagar; Ganesh Chaturdhi; Ghadiyas; Gokarna; Gorakshanāth; Gorakshaka; Goraknath; Gosthani River; Govardhana Hill; Hayagrīva; Hiranya Kasipa; Hiranyagarbha; Jyeshta; Jyotir Linga; Kabandha; Kālighat; Kalima; Kalmān; Kamandalu; Kamma caste; Kanchīpuram; Kanipakam; Kannada; Karnataka; Kārtika; Kausalya; Kedarnath; Kondaveedu; Krishna Paksha; Krittika; Kumkum; Lakh; Lakshmi; Lakulīsa; Madiga; Maghā; Māgha; Mahalakshmi; Mahālaya Amāvāsya; Mahishi; Malayalī; Malyadripuram; Mānchala; Mantralayam; Mandakini River; Mandodari; Mangalapuram; Mangala Sutra; Manik Prabhu; Mantra Shastra; Maratha; Marmakala; Mīna; Mithila; Mlechhas; Modakas; Mrigasira; Nandiswar; Narasimha Saraswati; Nātha; Neem tree; Nirvikalpa; Padmasali caste; Pādyami; Pālakādu; Pāndya; Paramahamsa; Pariah; Penugonda; Phalguna; Pīpul tree; Pramadhas; Pramadi; Prārabdha; Pratisarga Parvan; Prayag; Preta; Pulihora; Purandara; Purānas; Pūrna Kumbha; Purushārdās; Raghavendra Swamī; Rāhu; Rajahmundry; Rama Setu; Ramalingaswamī; Ramanuja; Rāsi; Raurava; Rēvati; Rishi Ganga; Rohini; Rudrākshas; Sabarimala; Sabaragiri; Sada Siva Brahmendra; Sahyadri; Sāligrama; Salivahana; Sanātana Dharma; Satsang; Savikalpa; Sayujya; Shatabhisha; Shikha; Shilajit; Shyama; Shyama Charan Lahiri; Somalata; Somayaga; Sorghum; Sravana; Sudarsan; Sukla Paksha; Svāti; Tanjavur; Tantra; Tāradevi; Tatwam; Tīrtha; Tilak; Tirumala; Tirupati; Tithi; Toddy; Trayodasi; Tripura; Tripurantakam; Trishul; Tula; Udipi; Uttara Phalguni; Vaisakha; Vamadeva; Vara Siddhi Vinayaka; Varnāshrama Dharmas; Vasudevananda Saraswati; Venkateswara; Vibhishana;

1 https://en.wikipedia.org

Vidyāranya; Vijayawada; Vīrabhadra; Viraja River; Visakha; Visishta Advaita; Yadava; Yajnopaveetam; Yajurveda; Yati; Yavana; Zamindar.

Yoga Wiki[1]:

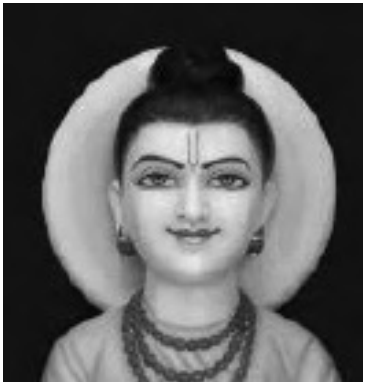
Adwaita; Amāvāsya; Anagha; Ankusa; Apsara; Avadhūta; Badrinath; Bhiksha; Brahmanas; Chandala; Chitra; Chitragupta; Dasa Maha Vidyas; Dasami; Devanagari; Dharma; Dharma Sāstra; Gokarna; Govardhana Hill; Hayagrīva; Hiranya Kasipa; Hiranyagarbha; Jyotir Linga; Kamandalu; Kausalya; Kedarnath; Krishna Paksha; Krittika; Lakh; Lakshmi; Maghā; Māgha; Mahalakshmi; Mandakini River; Mangala Sutra; Mīna; Mithila; Mrigasira; Narasimha Saraswati; Nātha; Nirvikalpa; Paramahamsa; Pariah; Parivrajaka; Phalguna; Preta; Purānas; Rāhu; Rāsi; Rēvati; Rohini; Rudrākshas; Sanātana Dharma; Satsang; Savikalpa; Sayujya; Shatabhisha; Shikha; Shilajit; Shyama; Sravana; Sudarsan; Sūnya; Svāti; Tantra; Tāradevi; Tatwam; Tithi; Tripura; Trishul; Tula; Vamadeva; Venkateswara; Vibhishana; Vīrabhadra; Viraja River; Visakha; Visishta Advaita; Yadava; Yajurveda; Yati; Yavana.

Further Sources:

Mersenne-Wiki[2]: Mersenne number
www.prabhuramlalji.com: Ramlal Maha Prabhu

1 http://wiki.yoga-vidya.de
2 http://www.mersennewiki.org

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye



Srīpāda Srīvallabha

Srīpāda Rājam Saranam Prapadye

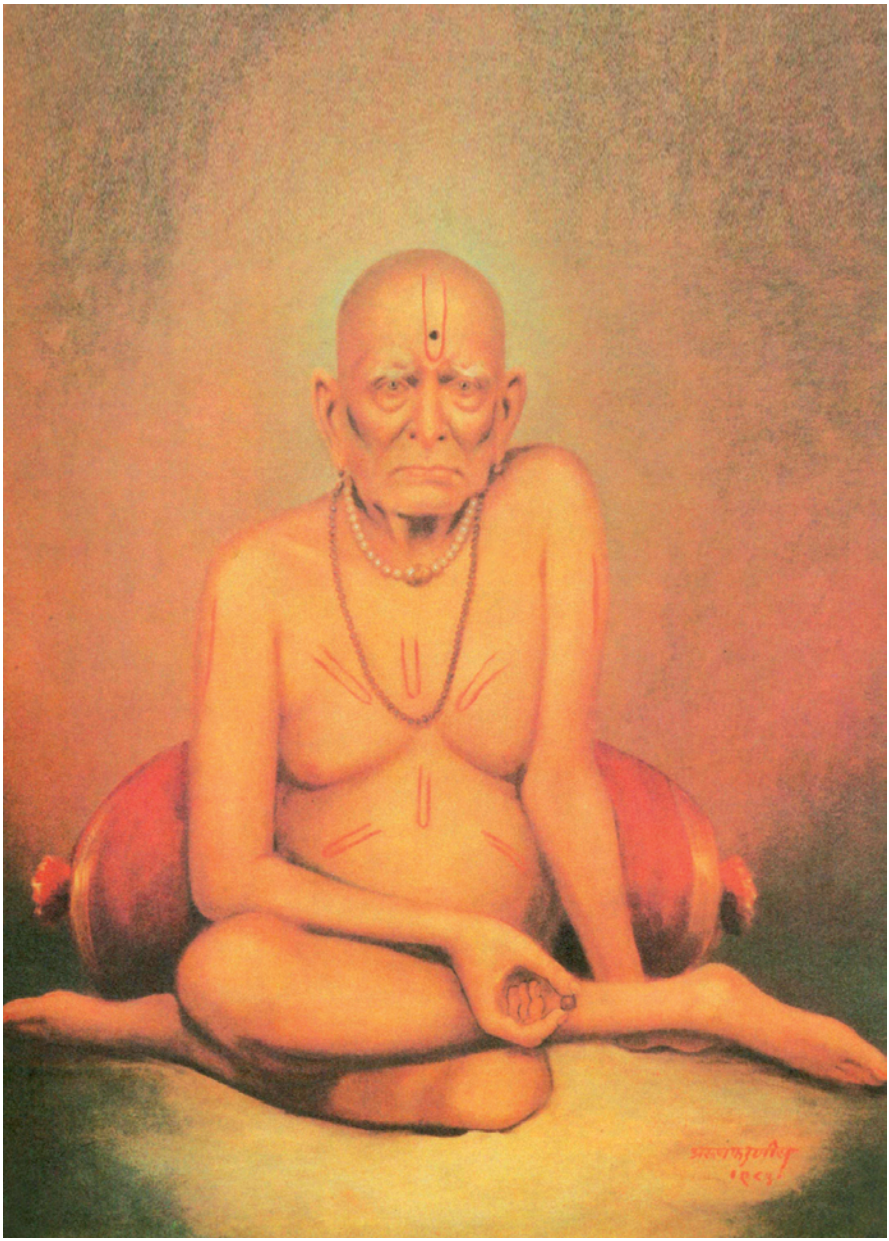
Appendix VII

Pictures

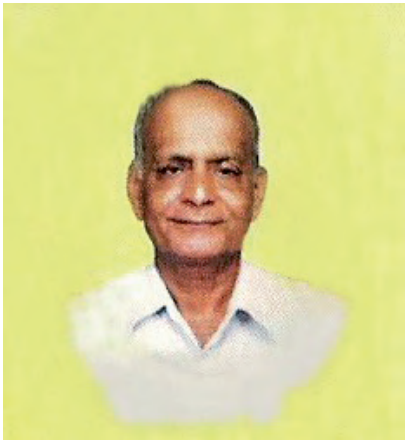
Lord Dattatreya

Srīpāda Srīvallabha
(1320 – 1350)

Narasimha Saraswati
(1378 – 1459)



Swamī Samartha
(- 1878)



Malladi Govinda Deekshitulu (- 13 May, 2012)
Brought to light the Srīpāda Srīvallabha Charitāmrutam in 2001

Srī Sajjanagada Ramaswamy (1925 - 2018)
Spiritual head of the Maha Samsthanam, Pithapuram

Pithapuram: Maha Samsthanam, entrance

Pithapuram: Maha Samsthanam

Pithapuram: Maha Samsthanam
Statue of Srīpāda Srīvallabha in front of the temple

Pithapuram: Maha Samsthanam
Audumbara tree in front of the temple

Pithapuram: Maha Samsthanam
Statues of Srīpāda, Dattatreya and Narasimha Saraswati

Pithapuram: Kukkuteswara temple
Statues Dattatreya Avatars

Panchadev Pahad:
Srī Vittal Baba temple with the statue of Srīpāda

Panchadev Pahad:
Srīpāda statue in the Rukhmini Panduranga Swamī temple

Panchadev Pahad: Dattatreya statue

Panchadev Pahad:
View over the Krishna river to Kuruvapuram

Kuruvapuram: Srīpāda statue

Kuruvapuram: Srīpāda temple, entrance

Kuruvapuram: Srīpāda temple, inner courtyard

Kuruvapuram: Srīpāda statue in the temple

Kuruvapuram: **Door relief** Shirdi Sai Baba (- 1918)